DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 347 362 CE 061 606

AUTHOR Stevens, Paul
TITLE Career Transitions: The Australian Experience.
INSTITUTION Centre for Worklife Counselling, Sydney (Australia).
REPORT NO ISBN-1-875134-04-2
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 203p.
AVAILABLE FROM Centre for Worklife Counseling, P.O. Box 407, Spit Junction, New South Wales 2088, Australia.
PUB TYPE Guides - General (050)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC09 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Change; *Career Counseling; *Career Development; Career Planning; Dislocated Workers; Employer Employee Relationship; Foreign Countries; *Job Satisfaction; Job Search Methods; *Midlife Transitions; Outplacement Services (Employment); Promotion (Occupational); *Quality of Working Life; Vocational Interests

ABSTRACT

This book is designed to aid career counselors in Australia help their clients search for enhanced well-being in their occupations and to help organizations and human resource staff members dealing with employees' career development. The book is organized in four parts. Parts 1 and 2 explore the career transition journey that a typical person undertakes. Discussion centers on worklife events--career hazards and managing worklife transitions. Subjects covered include expected and unexpected events during career journeys, life stages, aging and change, influences, dual career couples, career stress, career burnout, job content, employment environment, career life-cycle, career analysis, self-assessment, career transition pitfalls, underestimating job-seeking complexity, surviving politics, and career plateaus. Part 3 details the various ways in which people can be assisted in identifying the career-related actions that are likely to bring about an improvement in their living. Some of the topics explored include the need for help, employer's involvement, resistance to help, counselor's obligations, structured analysis, resources, and networks. Part 4 discusses the issues of how an organization can assist, why it should, and how. The discussion is illustrated by examples of career support systems activities within several organizations. An appendix contains a sample of questions from a career development program questionnaire. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED347362

CAREER TRANSITIONS

The Australian Experience

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

P Stevens

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PAUL STEVENS

CE061606

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Career Transitions

It is without doubt a landmark text in Career Development. It provides the practitioner with an intellectually stimulating text and reference.

Alastair Rylatt, Principal
EXCEL Human Resource Development

You have written a most valuable work which will have a very wide appeal.

Peter Philipson, Manager, Training & Development
Merck Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd

Career Transitions will be a useful book for many—especially those confused about their career directions, which includes a lot of us these days.

Dr Bob Kane, Deputy Head
School of Business & Public Administration
University of Technology, Sydney

In this book you have developed a process which is exciting and innovative, and from your experience, you know it works. It will make a major contribution to knowledge and practice in worklife counselling.

John H Buss, Dean, School of Business & Computing
University of New England, Northern Rivers

Your commitment to supporting and empowering individuals in their search for meaning and greater career satisfaction is evident throughout the book and gives it a personable tone. Career Transitions is very comprehensive and certainly summarises everything a Counsellor needs to know about client interviews and self-exploration.

Judith Hamilton, Principal
Career Change Consulting, WA

Career Transitions is very good—in concept, structure, content and, of course, your inimitable style. The strength of your material is the practical experience on which it is based.

Ken Williams, Director
Office of Redeployment & Retraining, WA

Career Transitions

PAUL STEVENS

The Centre for Worklife Counselling
Sydney

Published in Australia by
The Centre for Worklife Counselling
Suite One, 120–122 Prince Albert Street
Mosman Junction, Sydney, NSW 2088, Australia
Tel.: (02) 969 4548

An Explanation—Worklife

The Centre for Worklife Counselling often provokes comment about its name. The term 'Worklife' was chosen to reflect our continuing work in research, counselling, training and publishing material which relates to improving people's enjoyment from their employment activities and other aspects of their lives. We do not accept the traditional view of career counselling—that is, to help people acquire satisfaction only from their working hours. We consider that occupational satisfaction can only occur when a person's total needs are included in the assessment of what is lacking and what needs to be done to increase inner well-being, improved relationships with others, and effective performance both at work and non-work activities. Ours is a holistic approach—we try to consider all features of a person at the same time as maintaining a respect for personal privacy by the use of non-threatening inquiries into thoughts and circumstances.

This book is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher. Inquiries to be made to The Centre for Worklife Counselling.

First edition, 1990

© Paul Stevens Personnel Services Pty Ltd 1990

ISBN 1 875134 04 2

1. Career development. 2. Job satisfaction. 3. Personnel management. 4. Quality of life. I. Title.

Contents

Part One: Worklife Events and Career Hazards 1

A day of work • Career journeys • Expected events • Unexpected events • Non-events • Life stages • Aging and change • Influences of other people • Expectations of others • Significant other • Dual career couples • Career stress • Career burnout • Job content • Employment environment • Lifestyle contradictions • Characteristic symptoms • Returning to real self • Long-term solution • Emotional satisfaction • Career life cycle • The joy of work • Career development theory • The career transition experience • Community resources

Part Two: Managing Worklife Transitions 35

Personal responsibility • Willingness to risk • Time • Three-dimensional approach • The real facts about goals • Career success • Structured career analysis • Biographical review • Self-assessment • Opportunity awareness • Decision learning • Transition training • Career transition pitfalls • Mood control • Lack of focus • Research interviews • Reality testing • Career transition loneliness • Need for a coach or mentor • Pressure from others • Underestimating job-seeking complexity • Criteria for promotion • Surviving worklife politics • Career plateau • Checking progress • Journey's end

Part Three: Helping Worklife Transitions 75

Need for help • Employer's involvement • Boss as coach, not as counsellor • Counselling beliefs • Resistance to help • Multiple concerns • Client's agenda • Counsellor's obligations • Counselling in practice • Motivation • Structured analysis • Client decision making • Counselling sequence • The 'homework' approach • Interpreting the homework • Transition timing • Transition training • Supporting the client • From acquaintances and strangers • From the counsellor • Resources for the individual • Careers reference centres • Networks • ASCO • Publications • Careerskills Centre, Perth • Self-help support clubs • Organisation sponsored support • The pleasure of helping

Part Four: Career Development Support Systems 123

Employer's role • Why try? • Transfer and promotion actions • People's expectations • Organisational change • Award restructuring • Assistance to dual career couples • EEO and Affirmative Action • Effect of career development support systems • Targeting career development efforts • Implementing career development help • Productivity benefits • Examples of career development support systems • Surveys • Workshops • Workbooks • In-company career information centre • Employee inventory systems • Selection of support systems • Workshops as support systems • Workbooks as support systems • Career counselling • Worklife counselling • Resources for organisations • Career development consultants • Preference and interests measurement • International Journal of Career Management • ACER • ERIC • Published textbooks • Associations of career counsellors • People who have to go • Resettlement (outplacement) services • Morale retention • Choosing skilled outplacement help • Lack of understanding about career development • Cost and time • Realism about outcomes

Bibliography 171

Appendix: Sample of Questions from XYZ Pty Ltd Career Development Program Questionnaire 172

Acknowledgements 180

Index 181

About the author

After twenty-one years' employment experience as a Personnel Manager dealing with the problems of employer/employee relationships in the UK, Canada and Australia, Paul Stevens created The Centre for Worklife Counselling in 1980. His concern for individuals and their search for satisfaction in work motivates his daily counselling and teaching activities and his writing. He has become nationally known as a counsellor, broadcaster and author of eighteen publications on worklife and career management issues. While continuing his counselling practice, he has been engaged by organisations to advise on their career development activities and to assist organisational restructuring where it impacts the job satisfaction of employees. Paul continues extending his work to include career support to members of Religious Orders and as a consultant to State Governments, devising innovative measures which assist both employer and employee to cope with change.

Preface

There are a growing number of books being published on worklife strategies offering some simple and readily comprehensible recipes. Such books can be entertaining and insightful. Unfortunately, few of these books have a sound empirical basis for their analyses of people's career behaviours. This book is based on a different approach.

Career Transitions is an endeavour to help both individuals and organisations. It is designed to help career counsellors engaged in aiding their clients' search for enhanced well-being in their occupational activities. It is also designed to help organisations—concerned line managers, Chief Executive Officers, human resource staff and the growing number of those appointed as Career Development Officers.

Parts One and Two explore the career transition journey that a typical person undertakes. I will share the approaches I have learnt by experience in a practical, rather than a scientific, sense to assist this journey. This has involved considerable design, experiment and evaluation activities. Part Three details the various ways in which people can be facilitated to identify their own career-related actions which are likely to bring about an improvement in their living. Part Four tackles the issues of how an organisation can assist: Why should it? And if it does, how? This is illustrated by examples of career support systems activities within several organisations.

During the past eleven years I have counselled over 2000 people on a one-to-one relationship basis. Also, more than 1600 people have participated in Career and Life Planning Workshops conducted by me. In addition, many hundreds more have completed career analysis questionnaires I designed and then analysed and interpreted their responses. Regular talk-back radio programs have allowed me to learn more from others about their worklife difficulties and career transitions. Everyone sharing their problems and triumphs enables me to be the conduit by which many more may benefit.

What I do is help people to manage change in their lives; to alleviate the pressures, to guide the finding out of what they really want to do and how they can go about making that happen. All have helped advance the idea that people who learn how to love their work make

a significant contribution to others, while growing into self-hood. As you will read, clients of my counselling practice are an integral part of what follows. They contributed the quotations I have placed as beacons in the career transition journey. My clients overcame both internal and external obstacles to become happier in their worklife by cultivating self-respect and inner security and developing a commitment to their talents. I also work as an adviser to a variety of organisations, designing and reviewing their career development support systems.

This comprises the database on which the contents of this book are based. I make no claim that what follows are the only or best methods in developing procedures for helping individuals and organisations. But I do have the conviction, through observing the effect on many other people's lives, that the contents, when acted upon, will enhance the reader's living and improve organisational effectiveness.

Thank you to those who have allowed me to be a companion during their career transition. You have contributed to an enthralling journey from an office in a converted bedroom in my home to my situation today. Assisting others resolve worklife difficulties has increased my enthusiasm and respect for those I feel privileged to help. It is a most satisfying way of earning a living. It has been fulfilling to be a pathfinder with their assistance in the complexities of adult career transitions. Again, many thanks . . . and there is so much more I have yet to learn and share with others. While writing this book about you and other people, where and how you work, I have, of course, been describing my own odyssey.

Paul Stevens
Mosman, Sydney 1990

We live in a world of organisations. In less than a century they have come to dominate our lives. Community and Church have been replaced by the work organisation as second only to the family as the most important influence on our lives.

John W. Hunt, London Business School

When we consciously choose to do work that we enjoy not only can we get things done, we can get them done well and be intrinsically rewarded for our effort. Money and security cease to be our only payments.

Marsha Sinetar, *Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow*
(Dell/Bantam 1987)

Identifying a satisfying career is not the outcome of gimmickry but of careful self-examination not only of capabilities and knowledge but of values and priorities. A satisfying career is invented, not found and exploited. It is pre-tested and pre-examined for its potential to provide opportunity for personal growth.

Sidney A. Fine, The W.E. Upjohn Institute
for Employment Growth Research, USA

Part One: Worklife Events and Career Hazards

A day of work • Career journeys • Expected events • Unexpected events • Non-events • Life stages • Aging and change • Influences of other people • Expectations of others • Significant other • Dual career couples • Career stress • Career burnout • Job content • Employment environment • Lifestyle contradictions • Characteristic symptoms • Returning to real self • Long-term solution • Emotional satisfaction • Career life cycle • The joy of work • Career development theory • The career transition experience • Community resources

> Transition (tran sizh un) n. Passage or change from one place, state, or action to another; change, change-over, passing, passage, shifting, jump, leap, conversion, variation, transformation, transmutation; progression, gradation, graduation.
>
> *(Budget Macquarie Dictionary)*

A day of work

It is Wednesday morning close to 8.30 a.m. In a few minutes in my counselling room I will be greeting a new client, Sandra. She has been referred to me by her doctor. It will be the beginning of another journey within another person's life. Later in the morning, Ted is due to return for his third consultation and report on progress with the homework I set him. He phoned earlier in the week to say how emotionally exhausted he felt, yet he was of the opinion that logic and clarity over the future direction for his career are emerging.

Joseph is due at midday. He was fired three weeks ago by the employer with whom he had worked for fifteen years. Well, not actually fired in a strict legal sense. Together with ten other colleagues, he was made redundant on a Friday afternoon and required to leave his employer's premises the same day. Economic conditions within his employer's industry, not his work performance, had precipitated this experience. His wife noticed a rapid lowering in his morale and rang

last week to seek advice on how to encourage her husband to visit me. "He is so proud that to seek such help will be viewed as weakness," she said. This is a common plea and I was able to recommend certain tactics. They worked, and Joseph booked in.

Then there'll be a break from counselling while I visit an employer in the early afternoon to discuss the findings from an extensive survey of the staff of a particular manager. They were asked about their attitudes towards their working life and their firm. The findings are strong in tone and potentially very useful if the manager views the data as a basis for changing certain entrenched procedures in order to improve morale among his work force; this will benefit both employees and employer. On the other hand, he might take the results too personally and become annoyed with his staff. It should be an interesting session.

I conclude the day with Elizabeth. She has established a pattern of meeting with me every six months after work to discuss her current situation, her successes and failures and current threats to her well-being at work. She will come well prepared with an agenda of concerns and, following our previous consultations, with alternative plans of action for each of the concerns as a basis for our discussion.

A speech at a school to Year 10 and Year 11 students and their parents is scheduled for 7 p.m. If the evening follows the usual pattern I will find myself responding to questions about the parents' personal concerns about their worklife as much as their children's.

The paperwork on my desk won't receive my attention today. I know there is urgency in the letter from a woman living on an outback property who has abruptly found herself in the situation where she must relocate to a large town or city and seek employment. She wants advice on how to achieve this. There are also fifty foolscap pages of writing from Bill, a forty-eight year old schoolteacher who was referred to me after he had hit a child in his classroom and was subsequently suspended from teaching. Guilt and loss of self-esteem characterise Bill's attempt to work out why and what else he can do. I read five 'life' stories each week as part of my commitment to clients to interpret or audit their worklife experiences and life management concerns.

All today's clients are on a journey, each at a different point along the way to a resolution of career-related matters which are causing varying degrees of vexation and stress. The effect of these problems is not restricted to the individuals. Their loved ones, and in some cases their employers, are anxious for the positive solutions to their particular career dilemmas.

It's a typical day ahead being a worklife counsellor and consultant to organisations on career development support systems. The job title I've created for this nature of work is the Sadness to Joy Facilitator!

Career journeys

- *I need money to live*
- *I need stimulation from achieving*
- *I want to learn about people, the world, myself*
- *I want to explore my potential*
- *I want to be challenged intellectually, spiritually, emotionally*
- *I want an activity that is all mine*
- *I haven't enough money to explore all of the above without working for pay from an employer.*

Each day that I am not consulting within organisations or fulfilling lecture tour commitments I participate in the career journeys of individuals attending my counselling practice. Such days are very precious to me. First of all, the individual facing me has shown me respect by thinking that I may be able to assist. Second, I learn from them all, whatever their age, circumstances or personality, and whatever stage they are currently grappling with in their career transition journey. I learn about them but I also learn about their employment environments. There would be many managing directors and heads of departments who would envy my access to information about the attitudes of their employees and the effects of their managerial styles. Thank goodness there are no 'insider trading' aspects to worklife counselling!

People who come to consult me have taken a brave step. It is often easier to drift along passively in an unsatisfactory situation at work and hope things will turn out for the best, than take action. But inactivity is not a recipe for worklife satisfaction. A far more fruitful endeavour is for individuals to take control of their own career progress, develop their own distinctive style, and learn how to influence others to allow them to behave in a way which is more satisfactory to their needs. A career is not built on what appears to be attractive in the world of employment but on what is good within the person. The sharing of information on how this can be achieved, how employers, trainers and counsellors may assist, is what this book is about.

Our career journey commences before we leave secondary education and make the transition from school to higher education or employment. It involves a complex interplay of sociological and psychological aspects. These include factors such as family social background, sex role stereotyping, ethnicity, home location, ability, perceived influence of parents, teachers and peers, plus self-assessment of our scholastic competencies. This multivariate analysis is undertaken either consciously or unconsciously at a stage in life when we lack sufficient maturity to analyse these factors for ourselves in a logical, systematic manner.

The career path choice is made, or made for us, often in an environment which infers that it is irrevocable. Our destiny for the next forty years is ordained, or so it seems to us at the time.

Some will commit to this career path choice in a reasonably rational and purposive manner. Others will drift into a career, or decide seemingly spontaneously. All will start the journey with little, or no, awareness that it is but one of many significant worklife decisions we will make before our career journey ends. During this journey we will make many career transitions, some self-initiated, others as a reaction to events in our lives.

Expected events

The major life events we usually expect to be part of adult life are marrying, becoming a parent, starting a first job, retiring and dying. Statistics are regularly gathered and published about these expected events, such as age of marriage and dying. The 1986 census within Australia and subsequent data in 1987 show the average age at first marriage as 25.9 years for males and 23.8 for women (in 1963 the average age for a bridegroom was 23 and for brides 19.5). The life expectancy for a male who is now aged between 30 and 40 is 75.4 years and for a female is 80.72 years.

As we traverse childhood and reach adulthood each of us develops an expected timetable for these events. Because of a host of variables our life in fact may not conform to this expectation. Depending on these variables and our attitudes we adjust, either comfortably or not, to expected events which do not occur on our personal timetable. When we commence work for the first time and begin to learn about life at work we similarly form a vision of where our career may take us and calculate approximately when we will reach certain stages in

this career. The unpredictability of living means that we will encounter many unexpected events, even non-events, which will have a great bearing on our worklife.

Unexpected events

A concoction of disillusionment, frustration, dissatisfaction, breakdown in marriage, tumultuous living and desire to try a larger and more prospect-filled locality prompted me to migrate and alter the pattern of my career.

Secondary schooling in my personal experience focused on preparing me for Expected Events in my adulthood. Role models of previous students were frequently quoted by my teachers in terms of their successes, but the intimacy of their journey to these successes was not shared. The quest for high performance in learning and its associated exams was merely extrapolated into the theme that this was the foundation for future achievements. I do not recollect one lesson which encouraged discussion about recovering from disappointments in life's journey. The legacy of this education was one of striving at all times to do one's best and the inference that good results, that were also good for me, would follow.

My naivety did not last long once I had started full-time employment. The memory of my early career setbacks is clear, and even thirty years later I am still a little resentful that I was so ill prepared to accommodate them. So it is in the lives of others, as I know from listening to my clients and reading their biographical writings. In fact, I find it very useful to help them remind themselves of how many setbacks they have experienced and conquered. I use the diagnostic aid 'Career Setbacks' for this purpose. It doesn't encompass all the career setbacks that can be experienced, but it goes a long way to helping clients appreciate the distance they have so far traversed in these terms.

The view we take of our degree of career satisfaction is a function of several things. When we accept an appointment with an employer or set ourselves up in self-employment we are prepared to provide our time and talents in return for remuneration and an expectation of psychological success. In this arrangement there is an expectation of a fair trade. One gives of one's self in an expectation of receiving. In reality, the view we have of the degree of equitable balance of this trade changes over time. It changes because of unexpected events of a desirable and/or undesirable nature. Speedy promotion, lack of

CAREER SETBACKS

Action: Circle, underline or highlight all you have experienced

poor performance appraisal . . . job application rejection . . . made short list but not job offer . . . retrenched . . . work colleague told tales . . . flirtation at office became widely known . . . experienced anxiety attacks at work . . . insomnia . . . lost enthusiasm for Mondays . . . inadequate salary review . . . ignored office politics and suffered . . . sexually harassed . . . failed probationary period . . . lost out on training course selection . . . learnt about attractive transfer opportunity too late . . . made redundant . . . observed taking home office stationery supplies . . . damaged company car . . . fell out with General Manager's secretary . . . read negative notes about myself on boss' desk . . . did not make sales quota . . . did not confirm boss' onward reservations . . . acted silly at company-organised function . . . selection interviewer talked too much about self . . . a bad reference . . . career burnout . . . career boredom . . . career path blockage . . . experienced reverse discrimination . . . report returned marked 'unsatisfactory' . . . fell asleep at a meeting . . . exceeded budget . . . salary decreased . . . employment agent disclosed my job search . . . dead-end job . . . regarded as 'over-qualified' . . . own business failure . . . overheard denigrating my boss . . . employer promises unfulfilled . . . misinformed about reality of job . . . victim of office politics . . . fired! . . . spotted falsifying expenses . . . lost a good boss . . . lost addresses of business contacts . . . concluded chose wrong career . . . became 'chained' to my job title . . . company relocation caused extended commuting . . . current employer heard I was looking around . . . reluctant to delegate . . . caught doing too many 'foreign orders' during office hours . . . didn't get on with own job, but meddled in others' . . . fell out with the directors . . . changes in company policy reduced career opportunities

Action: Recall how you recovered. Would you act differently now? How?

promotion; surprise pay increase, marginal pay increase; new learning of a nature enjoyed, no significant change in knowledge level, etc. We try to manage these situations continuously. Every now and then

the experience is not comfortable. The unexpected event has changed the nature of the trade to a situation where we regard it as unsatisfactory, debilitating or because it is causing discomforting stress. When this occurs we have the choice to persevere without initiating any change or take action to redress the balance of the trade. Many do not detect this situation as an opportunity for choice but depend on their employer to implement the remedy. This is an abdication of personal responsibility and an erroneous view; employers never state explicitly in their employment offer that they will provide happiness.

Whatever career dilemma we are experiencing today needs to be seen as part of the tapestry of life, not as an isolated unexpected event. By perceiving that the dissatisfaction and confusion currently being experienced over worklife, or the emotional hurt due to a recent negative occurrence at work, are part of a mosaic of the reality of living, can help us bear up more readily under the strain of it.

The value of Unexpected Events in our lives is immense. They continually influence our character and how we relate to others and our environments. That is not to say that we should put off or even avoid career planning but that we should harness what we have already experienced and learn how to manage setbacks more effectively. And, of course, all the Unexpected Events we have experienced are not necessarily of a negative nature or outcome. I write with some fervour that what I first perceived as a negative Unexpected Event—being fired from my employment as a Personnel Director eleven years ago—has subsequently led to an enthralling and deeply satisfying new way of earning and living.

When a person accepts an employment offer it is rarely anticipated that it will lead to mobility from this employer to another. Yet the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) published statistics in 1989 which reveal a rate of mobility that has astonished many. The ABS data showed that 20 per cent of those working in February 1988 had changed employers a year later, compared with 14 per cent in 1984. Almost half of the 7.5 million people in jobs at the time of the survey had been in them for less than three years. The significance of the data raises considerable questions as to what causes employees to resign and seek out alternative employment. What unexpected events occur for so many in the early period of the time with a new employer?

I believe that this degree of restlessness is derivative from low levels of satisfaction in their worklife. It also points to the general level of inability among the population to work out what actually constitutes

job satisfaction for themselves, so that their choice of occupation and employer is made more thoroughly.

Crises brought about by unexpected events and change occur all through life. We are continually at the beginning of, in the midst of, or resolving transitions caused by them. Some are initiated by us due to changed circumstances, some by the actions of others, including employers.

In worklife, when an Unexpected Event occurs, it is very easy to sink rapidly into depression. Many behave as if they have no control over life events or their reactions to them. They seem to expect negative events to happen and do not believe they are able to prevent their recurrence; the cause and control is seen to be outside their capacity.

Involuntary loss of employment precipitated for me the most unhappy period of my life. My struggle with shame and unhealthy self-pity, loss of self-esteem and an inability to cope with rejection did later evolve into a determined search for methods to help others either prevent such occurrences or recover from them. I recollect most vividly the feeling of anger that I should feel that way. Such an abyss of unhappiness was not what I felt I deserved. My feelings of defencelessness appalled me but I seemed unable to change them. I retreated from loved ones, friends, acquaintances, although the help of others was needed to restore me after this Unexpected Event in my career. I have seen and consoled many others experiencing similar unwelcome emotions. I have loaned my companionship and skill to assist their recovery. I now know that a structure for our thinking, support and action is the therapy required. It has felt like a mission to explore, design and evaluate such structures.

Non-events

Most people grow from teenage to adulthood expecting to marry. Current national census figures reveal that more than three million Australians have never married—nearly 30 per cent of the total adult population. This prompts book publishers such as Collins to publish in 1989 *Why Aren't You Married?* by Jillian McFarlane. Among the many reasons given in reply is the theory that many people are not marrying because of their pursuit of personal autonomy. The expectation of being married changes along the way and prompted one of my clients to comment: "I have very much two things running side by side: this ability to be independent and successful and not worry about

parenthood, and a conditioning from my childhood. These have been continually fighting each other."

The life events that occur 'on time' in our expectations do not usually precipitate a crisis or self-questioning about their appropriateness. It is the unanticipated or non-events that cause problems. For some, the incongruities between expected, unexpected or non-events represent new freedoms for their worklife actions but for others new uncertainties, debilitating stress and confusion as to courses of personal action.

I have not accumulated sufficient money to retire in my forties to a tropical island, nor climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Kenya, nor taken a year off to wander unhurriedly through other cultures or pursue at leisure my interest in Renaissance literature. Nor have I fathered three children. I am sure you can recite a similar litany of plans, fantasies, dreams and intentions which have not eventuated. What is important is how each of us accommodates their non-occurrence. If we dwell too much on what might have been it will reduce our energies and commitment to realising what is yet to come. It will imperil working out what it is precisely we want to happen and working hard to increase its likelihood. This implies taking stock of how far we have journeyed, auditing who we are today and determining what really matters. Along this life journey we have changed, adjusted, compromised, set new goals a thousand times. What has been lacking in many lives is a reliable structure, or method, by which we might undertake this task and so move on to reducing the incidence of Non-Events, turning them into Expected Events in the process. That wise man of Stratford-on-Avon, Shakespeare, expressed this so ably in the sixteenth century:

> There is a history in all men's lives,
> Figuring the nature of the times deceased;
> The which observed, a man may prophesy,
> With a near aim, of the main chance of things,
> As yet not come to life; which in their seeds,
> And weak beginnings, lie intreasured.

Life stages

Many researchers have endeavoured to classify the crises or expected events we are likely to face as we traverse the journey through life as expected events and to link them with age. Hence we are expected

to seek adventure more than meaningful work in our early twenties, have a 'mid-life' crisis between the ages of thirty-five and forty-four, feel in our early fifties a form of silent despair, a fear of becoming irrelevant in marriage and work, and in our sixties to experience trauma through the loss of work in our lives. Life stages are depicted as an orderly succession of expected events in many textbooks as if they will happen on cue for all of us. Not only does this mislead, but it can cause some to abdicate all responsibility for setting out to change things and account for their particular feelings with the explanation that life is like that and we have to put up with it, or that better things are ahead.

My experiences in counselling and having access to the details of many hundreds of lives has taught me that there is no distinct age period at which these psychological issues occur. One can experience the trauma usually associated with mid-life crisis at twenty-four, or feelings of irrelevancy at any age, and so forth. The timing I have learned depends more on life events than chronological age. Age, I have found, is an unreliable indicator of what people will feel at various points in the journey. The subjective nature of aging allows some to perceive themselves as much younger or much older than their actual age. This is caused by a myriad of factors such as mental and physical health states, personal circumstances, the value placed on employment activities, and whether or not we are endeavouring to satisfy the expectations of others rather than the uniqueness of our individual self.

The scenarios and altered perspectives which occur in our lives are so varied and variable that no timetable of reliable anticipation can be determined. This conclusion is in contradiction to many writers on the subject of adult transitions such as Gail Sheehy, Daniel Levinson, George Valiant and Erik Erikson. It has been arrived at through the privilege of being involved in parts of my clients' journeys through life. Further detective work on my part has revealed that I am not alone in this view, as the published works of Michael Farrell of the State University of New York, Stanley Rosenberg of Dartmouth Medical School, Nancy Schlossberg at the University of Maryland and Bernice Neugarten of Northwestern University, USA record similar findings.

Aging and change

At 33 I am too old to be a whiz kid with promise, yet I lack the runs on the board to be considered a nascent high flyer.

Some people may feel they haven't made it in synchronisation with their anticipated event if not promoted to Managing Director by age thirty-five, while others may delay parenthood in order to consolidate their career future, and feel anguished about this decision. Age consciousness still prevails, but in the context of personal career management we have the choice for it to be either a stimulus or a brake upon our worklife actions.

Our feelings reflect our own personality at any age. Living in a rapidly changing society such as ours requires flexibility in adjusting to both the social realities external to us and the discernible changes within us.

How we react at different ages to unanticipated and non-events differs from one to another. My work with my clients indicates that the timing of events in our adult years is so variable that we cannot assume that particular transitions will occur at specific ages, nor that a person's behaviour will be consistent from one to another when experiencing a similar transition. Throughout adulthood age is a poor predictor of the timing of events, a person's interests, needs or work status. The nature of the career transition, whether recovering from lost employment, losing out on a coveted promotion or reacting to the change of ownership of an employer depends more on how it alters our role, relationships, routines and assumptions. We cope with the transition according to our reaction to these factors and our resources at the time, such as money, self-confidence, emotional stability, personal philosophy, values and self-view.

Change brings about a reaction within us and we differ over the time period of its effect as to the good or not so good nature of this reaction. Job loss, unsatisfactory relocation, and other career setbacks require that, when helping people recover, their resources and weaknesses need to be examined in relation to their particular situation, their self, their support relationships and their own view of strategies. In each of these four areas lies the opportunity to diagnose which needs more attention than the other. By systematically sizing up each of them we can learn how to build on our strengths and reduce the negative effects. Every change event or career setback is an opportunity for personal growth. But many have difficulty in perceiving this and often need help to restore their morale and take steps to accelerate recovery.

Our changing society has brought about changes in the social meanings of age and age-appropriate behaviours. Consequently career renewal can be initiated at any age. Whether implementing a career

change or career re-alignment age has more to do with the assumed attitudes of current or prospective employers than with the individual. Traditionally, there has been a tendency to segregate people into age groups which undertake activities such as education, parenthood, work and retirement as they journey through a particular age band. These attitudes ignore the real-life situations of people. The 1989 Nobel Prize winner for Literature, Camilo Jose Cela, endorses this reality when commenting: "Man has as many lives as years he's lived, and today I am in my 73rd life." Just as more people are marrying, divorcing, remarrying through their sixties and seventies, so can occupational activity be altered with realisable opportunities for new worklife experiences. There should be more media exposure of such career behaviours to accompany the portrayals of the Veterans' Olympics and sexagenarian first-time authors. Even 'pop' stars such as Cliff Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard are redefining career life cycles by continuing to be successful. Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and Sammy Davis are having more competition and less exclusiveness for the consumers' entertainment expenditure!

This blurring of traditional life periods does not mean that employment regulations relating to age are changing at the same pace. The difficulties faced by career renewal in the latter period of life are more inhibited than facilitated by employment law and employers' personnel practices. Yet progress is being made. In 1989 discrimination on the grounds of age is now high on the agenda of State Governments throughout Australia. South Australia is introducing legislation to make unlawful discrimination in employment on the grounds of age. The Western Australian Equal Opportunity Commission has circulated a discussion paper to the same objective. Compulsory retirement will be abolished in New South Wales in 1990. With 25 per cent of Australia's population now over 50 years of age these changes affecting many matters as well as careers are overdue.

Influences of other people

I don't feel comfortable with the idea of personal success and opportunities. I have never been encouraged to aim high but to feel protective of others and to see material wealth as a bit immoral and unfair.

I need to overcome the conditioning of my upbringing . . . the belief that as a wife and mother my needs are less important than the needs of those in my care . . . and to think or act otherwise is being extremely selfish and should make me feel guilty.

How we individually give meaning to our own life's journey requires that we accommodate the needs of others. The sadness is that many go too far with the latter and deny themselves opportunities for the renewed growth and satisfaction which is available from the pursuit of meaningful work.

Partnerships, or families, function as social systems. Members are together for a common purpose. Spoken and unspoken rules govern the interaction between members. Just like other systems, they adjust to maintain a balance. For example, when money is short, members cut back on spending. When a family member is having trouble with their worklife, attempts at stabilising the balance in relationships are endangered. Like incidences of severe illness or alcohol and drug problems, there is greater risk of strife between the adult members, sometimes separation, even divorce. Where conflict between work and positive attitudes to living exists and is allowed to be perpetuated, the family social system can easily break down causing hurt, anguish and alienation to more than the member experiencing the worklife difficulties. This contributes to the difficulty for the person to be able to see oneself clearly.

All my life I have hidden behind a wall. It hides what I see as my deficiencies from other people; I have always been quite sure that I had an awful lot of deficiencies to hide. I could never let people see what I was really like. They would never love me or like me on my own merits; I felt that the only way I could be loved would be by pleasing people all the time.

So this wall hid my true feelings from others. I was never allowed to display strong feelings; someone might not like it. I just had to put up with things I didn't like, because then things in the future would be so much nicer in comparison. So, if I got angry, I'd think I was at fault, feel guilty, and hide behind my wall again. One of the buttresses of this wall was 'being a doctor'. A doctor is supposed to hide her feelings in order to function properly; at least that was how I saw it.

So I think that for most of my career I've coasted along, not really enjoying medicine, not ever doing what I wanted to do, whatever that was, protected from the dangers by my wall, waiting for my white knight on his white charger to come and take me away. That way, I wouldn't have to displease my father by telling him I didn't like medicine. I would cope with sticky situations by ducking out, rather than meeting them head-on.

But, it didn't quite work out like that. I met a man and took the first 'risks' of my life when I left my secure Government job, sold my house, got married and moved to . . . . . But we lasted only a short time. So

there was I, alone in a strange town, no income, no job, no house, no friends. What hurt me really badly and still does was that my parents didn't give me the support that I needed—they expected me to comfort them.

I began to realise then that the way I had lived my life, trying to please other people, doesn't work. Pleasing others at your own expense doesn't make you happy. You'll only be happy when you live to please yourself. That does sound selfish, but I think you must be selfish at least to a certain extent to survive as an individual.

All this happened three years ago. It was then that I decided to start pleasing myself. I obtained work in landscape gardening and enrolled part-time in related studies.

Expectations of others: Our worklife does have an impact on our intimate and social relationships. Fear of failure, work performance anxiety, the dynamics of relationships affect more than the person experiencing the career dilemma. The expectations of others feature both negatively and positively in the lives of my clients. Many are living other people's lives. In some cases the dominant influence is from some family member already deceased. In carrying out career analysis as a prelude to career planning it is important for a person to identify to what degree the expectations of others have been absorbed. The quest is who you really are today, what you really want and expect from yourself. As none of us is devoid of memories, childhood experiences, family membership or current relationships, we need to identify who has influenced and continues to influence our values and self-concept, and by how much. We need to think about the significant people in our life and what they expect of us in terms of our worklife. What do others want us to be, to do, or to think? Once this analysis has been completed it is easier to determine what is our own thinking and what is inherited or absorbed from others, and needs to be identified as such.

Too many spend too much time endeavouring to please their boss. Genuine motivation for work can only come from within the person; from the awareness that the nature of the work we do is right for us as a unique, individual person. If this is lacking, no amount of praise or threat from another will make a person truly happy or highly productive.

At the time I felt it was expected of me to replace my lost priestly vocation and the choices that I saw as being acceptable to others were to study medicine, law or accountancy.

Success and well-being are not the family norms; struggle and subservience are. Succeed only a little; too much success is dangerous, so the individual must withdraw . . . the norm becomes inaction, procrastination and confusion.

What I am trying to articulate is the appalling realisation that I have been brought up to believe that if you do a job well, you will be satisfied.

Because I did not choose to follow my father into his business he took no interest in my career choice. Emotionally, he withdrew his support.

Significant other: It is not unlikely for a person grappling with a worklife problem to endeavour to disguise their situation from the significant other person in their life. A deteriorating career or work-based relationship, even loss of job, may be covered up by the maintenance of the daily routine. Not only does this usually lead to surprise and conflict at some stage when discovery is made, but such persons have also denied themselves the opportunity to verify their self-understanding with one who knows them well. Whether residing together or dating regularly, the significant other in a person's life has to accommodate the changes a person may make when resolving a lack of satisfaction with their worklife. The significant other is likely to be more supportive if allowed to contribute to the career transition activities and the decision-making required at several points along the way. Conversely, some are in relationships where the significant other is affecting their worklife activities negatively.

Although I have thought a great deal about my career, I seem to come to an abrupt halt when the personal aspects come into it. I feel that I have drawn the short straw in relation to my husband's career interests.

Dual career couples: My research reveals that in many dual career couple situations it is important to the male that his partner develop her occupational life as he does his own career pursuits. This is not the case in every partnership. In these days when having a child is a matter of choice and when career participation for both can be more enthralling and demanding than ever before, those who pursue dual career arrangements need to debate and review goals and plan regularly in order to achieve and resolve a host of conflicting demands.

To keep a desire for worklife fulfilment in a closet, to surrender or subjugate career-related personal growth denies both members of a dual career partnership a special enrichment from the relationship. It denies respect for each other as unique individuals.

Dual career couples are unlikely to be free of tensions arising from worklife, but even these can contain excitement as well as difficulty, their resolution providing a feeling of shared accomplishment, innovation and creativity as well as relief. Vicarious gratification can be derived from the partner's achievements while striving for and achieving one's own. Dual careers do offer for each person two sources of career satisfaction. But they require special effort in communication and resolution of conflicting demands that threaten their success. For those in dual career partnerships who put a premium on worklife achievement, training in career development and planning is important. Anticipating career blockages and coping with or avoiding career setbacks, self-preservation skills and office politics are subjects deserving study. The greatest threat to mutual satisfaction in dual career couple situations remains the fact that the concept of domestic backup continues to be primarily the burden of women. We are still far from equity in the sharing of household chores.

New patterns of living have brought about a new set of problems. The trend towards more egalitarian, sharing kinds of partner relationships is demanding complex career management strategies to ensure both parties fulfil their particular worklife ambitions if the partnership is to remain stable. The cost of career-related individuality should not necessarily be an increase in either our divorce rate or partners separating.

Setting clear goals among dual career couples means you are both setting out to exercise more control over the direction of your lives, improving abilities to foresee the future, increasing tolerance for new situations and extending the capacity for both to become the selves you truly are.

The impact of clear goals on dual career couples is significant. Health, happiness and income are strong reasons for striving for and working hard to clarify why each is pursuing a career. Another reason is the usefulness of clear goals in developing cooperative and constructive relationships between the individuals. The clearer the goals, the stronger the motivation to make it work. Energy is more productively focused.

Mutually satisfying dual-career partnerships are more likely when:

- Partners see their partnership characteristics as a balance, mutually enhancing;
- Neither sees the other as being in the service of the partner;

- An understanding is worked out about what sort of balance of achievement is tolerable;
- It is personally important to one that the other develop an occupational life (i.e. an emotional investment);
- In situations of conflicting demands, the advantages/disadvantages are considered for the family as a whole;
- A strategy is evolved that allows for each partner's development while both strive for an equitable balance of strains and gains;
- The arrival of the first child is well coped with as a pivotal point in the dual-career commitment.

Career stress

The range of career-related problems that people experience and have to solve for themselves is becoming formidable in both number and complexity. Not surprisingly, many of us hanker for former times when we simply went to work and got on with the problems arriving through the in-trays or via the production process. Now, it's as if we need the learning from a psychology degree, plus a sympathetic therapist, in order to survive a week on a payroll!

Yet an inner awareness tells us that life at work cannot be easy. Work satisfaction does not automatically happen. There are strategies for career enhancement which also contribute either to preventative action or recovery from setbacks. Time spent reviewing them is worthwhile and makes people less prone to adverse events in the employment situation. Overcoming the phenomenon of worklife burnout is one of them.

Career burnout: Burnout is characterised by emotional exhaustion, coupled with cynicism, and occurs among individuals who spend a lot of time under conditions of tension and negative stress. It is more likely to occur when we invest too much of ourselves in the job. Burnout diminishes our feelings of being worthwhile.

The popular myth is that it only occurs among those in the helping professions such as nursing, medicine, teaching and social work. In fact, it can affect anybody who feels the necessity to maintain a veneer of interest which covers the opposite set of emotions; in other words, a pretence or behaviour which does not reflect how they really feel

about recurring situations at work. Add that to a declining interest in the work content, sometimes simply because it has been completely mastered, and burnout can occur. The cause can be either in the job content or the employment environment or a combination of both.

I was in an office-based job before my last position and it was one deadline after another. When you finished one set, the next set was overdue—you never got ahead. The list of TO DO was always longer than the list of COMPLETED.

Job content: An unrelenting feeling of demand that the job necessitates behaviour which the inner self is really denying we want to provide, is conducive to burnout. Perhaps the initial challenge has wilted considerably since taking on the current job.

Without new learning of a nature and content which we would choose, rather than feel we have to obtain, humans are very susceptible to feeling low. A sustained period without learning or new challenges leads to forms of depression. At the chronic stage, the burnout phenomenon is at its most personally dangerous unless action is taken to alter this psychological pain, particularly if sufferers are trying to prevent others they interact with at work from noticing their dilemma.

Employment environment: There is no such thing as a pressure-free work environment, but pressure which is unrelenting can induce burnout. We need to evaluate regularly the culture or 'atmosphere' of a workplace in relation to our feelings. Is it one with which we are becoming compatible or should a change be initiated? Employment cultures which demand constant perfection and output at the same high level day after day without some variation are those where many burnout victims can be found.

Lifestyle contradictions: Lifestyle needs differ from one to another. Lifestyle needs are complex and relate to such matters as how we prefer to use time, whom we prefer to relate to and be with, how we react to a specific geographical location for home and worklife. It is a form of mapping out who one is and comparing it with what one does. For many the conflicts between their lifestyle needs and either their job content or employment environment, or both, are burdensome. When this occurs and the incompatibility is distinct, negative stress effects result.

ANALYSE YOUR CURRENT JOB

	Tick (✓) Yes	No	Unsure
Can you see clearly when you have done a good job?	☐	☐	☐
Does the work give you a sense of achievement?	☐	☐	☐
Is it obvious to you if the job is not done to standards acceptable to your boss?	☐	☐	☐
Are you dependent on co-workers to do this job well?	☐	☐	☐
Does the job require planning tasks more than one week ahead?	☐	☐	☐
Is the job a stepping stone along your desired career path?	☐	☐	☐
Is the job preparing you for more responsibility?	☐	☐	☐
Is it easy for others to see you do your best work in this job?	☐	☐	☐
Is it realistic to expect to earn more money within the next six months?	☐	☐	☐
Is your desired career move from this job likely within the next six months?	☐	☐	☐
Is the job:			
a) requiring you to use the skills you prefer using?	☐	☐	☐
b) important to the organisation?	☐	☐	☐
c) giving you responsibility for a complete piece of work?	☐	☐	☐

More than three of NO and/or UNSURE indicates action on your part is necessary to reduce the likelihood of career burnout

To overcome the worklife hardships I felt I withdrew into a very private world and vivid inner world nurtured through reading, films, radio and nature itself. Flora, fauna, sea, sky and terrain.

Characteristic symptoms: Career burnout is not simply the drained feeling you have at the end of a busy day—it's a progressive cycle of energy depletion and loss of vitality, affecting the emotions, body and spirit.

A person who is in a state of continual fatigue—the sort of fatigue neither nine hours' sleep nor a week's holiday relieves—could be a victim of burnout. It is often accompanied by feelings of extreme frustration. A dedication to work which is not being met by internal rewards of self-esteem, or a lack of external indicators from others that efforts are appreciated, characterise a state of mind now diagnosed as burnout. The person is probably trying harder and harder but accomplishing less and less.

The emotional self may be depressed, easily disappointed or consistently irritable. There may be reduced personal responsibility for outcomes, work alienation and lack of personal accomplishment. Physical symptoms may include fatigue and sleeplessness, or symptoms that will surprise and concern the sufferer, who will probably want to deny that they exist.

Relentless pursuit of one goal without the balance of other objectives in their life will eventually force burnout victims to take 'time out' to analyse their condition. If they don't, a friend, relative or work associate is likely to intervene and attempt to make them realise that they have a problem. Such assistance should not be rejected. It could trigger a chain of events which may help the person to avoid collapse from physical exhaustion or mental stress, or prevent them from turning to alcohol or drugs or actions which risk their employment status. Burnout becomes a real career hazard when sufferers realise that, emotionally, they have nothing left to give. Until this point is reached, the symptoms may have been obvious to others but not necessarily to the victim.

Other symptoms of burnout are emotional withdrawal, particularly from the significant other person in their life or from their employers' customers or clients. Less patience with family members and friends, talk of the 'great escape' to a different way of living (the Barrier Reef or a small farm in the country often feature here), or a realisation that the pretence of outward appearances is costing a lot in emotional energy are other signs.

An increasing reluctance to go to work was coupled with apathy as I did not feel my usual inclination to strive to change or improve work situations, for myself or others.

Returning to real self: Early actions should include getting regular exercise, eating better and obtaining more sleep. Finding some time alone is just as important. The length of time is not so important,

but the privacy and opportunity for reflection within a state of calm are. Those who resolve to sort things out can pass much time with thoughts circling a fixed issue like moths about a lamp, but with the most important eluding them. In this situation we need a structure for our thoughts, a systematic method for ordering them and the discipline of writing them down. The companionship of a skilled helper during this journey within the mind is the role of those engaged in human care counselling.

As a coping method, burnout sufferers should be advised to vary their routine at work as much as possible within the confines of their job and to start guarding their emotional energy. They should take more frequent breaks from demanding tasks, and talk about their feelings with someone who's not going through the same problems. They should not suffer in silence. A treat is a good idea, a pleasurable event, excursion or purchase they may have been thinking about for some time. Such treats can only be a temporary or short-term solution, but they can do wonders to restore the flagging spirit.

BURNOUT RECOVERY

- Learn and adopt tension dumping routines from a stress expert
- Develop a change plan
- Set a behaviour change objective and implement it
- Evaluate outcomes of these new actions
- Review career AND life management activities, personal values, and direction

Long-term solution: We should not allow this state to continue, pretending to ourselves that it is not a problem. An excerpt from Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* is particularly relevant here:

> No man engaged in a work he does not like can long preserve many saving illusions about himself. The distaste, the absence of glamour, extend from the occupation to the personality. It is only when our appointed activities seem by accident to obey the particular earnestness of our temperament that we can taste the comfort of complete self-deception.

Increased self-awareness is the way to a satisfactory solution; those who don't know themselves well will bend back and forth under the pressure at work. Not casual reflection on how far you have

come or what success has brought you, but a process of analysis which uses our past and present to map out a plan for the future is needed.

Such a plan should contain much more than work goals and schedules for their accomplishment. It also demands that people identify and rectify what is missing in their non-work living activities. Lifestyle management is the key to recovery or, more positively, protection from burnout. People need to develop a well balanced schedule of daily experiences which includes more of what they enjoy and less of what they dislike.

Such self-analysis may well identify a previously buried desire for a different way of earning a living. It may challenge assumptions about our physical and mental capabilities. The person with a strong sense of self is more likely to cope with stress. Sense of self comes from increasing our knowledge about self. This also contributes to raising our self-tolerance and the level of confidence we project to others. Positive self-awareness does not remove the anxieties associated with our living but does provide a strength for tolerating them and better managing the stress they cause. So, embark on a journey of self-discovery and clarify your values. Visit your local bookshop and select a range of 'self-help' books to guide you in this process and transition to increased inner wisdom. Such a state is a bulwark against the 'outside' world. Reflect on the last time you took time out and paused to consider how far you have come and where you are heading in all aspects of your living.

Recall what you really enjoyed learning at an earlier stage of life. Consider enrolling as a miscellaneous student in a new learning endeavour for the sake of your own interests rather than its value to your career. Get going on a planned program of reading in your favourite subject. It doesn't matter whether it is the lives of the Egyptian pharaohs, Renaissance philosophy or growing ground covering plants. The contents' appeal to the individual is the important determinant of the topic chosen.

Variation is the key to burnout recovery. The quest should be to include in life more of what you prefer, rather than what you feel obliged to do. Don't simply blame others, the situation, or 'them', for the state of depleted emotions. Taking personal responsibility for career management and lifestyle is the route to more satisfactory and fulfilling living. A re-evaluation of career direction and implementing a thoroughly considered option can bring about improvement in both psychological and physical disorders. The reports from my clients

following their career transition journey have convinced me there is a direct connection.

Those who choose to ignore burnout symptoms risk more than hurting themselves. But pacing themselves, introducing diversion, planning and implementing change and communicating with others can go a long way towards avoiding damage to relationships with others for whom they really care.

Emotional satisfaction

I have been forced, not unwillingly though, to formalise a semi-conscious awareness of myself. Consequently, I have acknowledged certain characteristics about me as important to change. I am now taking a much more imaginative approach to my next career action incorporating them.

Expectations of work satisfaction have changed. The survey which Eena Job undertook among those over eighty years of age in a Brisbane suburb included a review of their expectations when they were working. If she had undertaken the survey among a lower age group the following quotation would probably be quite different and reflect the change which has occurred in our expectations from our worklife. "The concept of work satisfaction was foreign to respondents in the survey. Many took pride in doing a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, and if they stayed with one firm or organisation over a long period, they developed a sort of loyalty to its interests. But the work itself was seldom questioned for its value either to the individual or to society. They seemed to regard a pay-packet, or the opportunity to earn one, as less of a right than a matter of good fortune. Work, as they saw it, was simply a necessity." Ms. Job is the author of *Eighty Plus: Outgrowing the Myths of Old Age* (University of Queensland Press).

Today, those of us engaged in work want much more. Yet, to arrive at a point where the unique characteristics of a person are comfortably matched with a particular occupation is a complex aspect of the journey through life.

As we change in physical abilities, personal circumstances and maturity so do our wants, needs and preferences in terms of what we like doing in our work tasks. Our work environment is also far from static. The supply and demand for certain sets of skills and experiences fluctuates. Occupations disappear and new ones emerge as economies and technology influence the manner in which work

is carried out. Our economy affects the prosperity or otherwise of different industries and in turn the requirements of employers for trained people.

What is known is that, in order to attain emotional satisfaction from work, people need to develop competencies in influencing the direction of their worklives: To become less reliant on their employer providing the satisfiers and apply some personal effort to define what is wanted. Most need assistance with this process, and this is likely to be required several times during their lifetime. It is in this area of human need that the profession of career guidance and worklife counselling functions.

Career life cycle

I've had a good innings being a nurse. I now want to explore my capabilities in something new.

Each career has a life cycle which has four discrete stages: Exploration, Advancement, Maintenance and Decline. It was not so very long ago that social scientists and career researchers believed that each person traversed each of these stages just once in a working lifetime. But today's common pattern of multiple careers during our adult years proves otherwise. In fact, my observations of the career records of my clients indicate that a person can traverse all stages of the career life cycle in as short a period as eight years. Obviously, this requires people to evaluate, make personal decisions and implement career transition actions at several points during their lifetime.

The Exploration stage involves individuals in making job and/or employer choices, settling down into a routine, growing in familiarity with the tasks of the occupation and making tentative conclusions about whether they like it or not. Some choose a career with care, others react to circumstances and 'find' themselves within a particular career path.

The Advancement stage usually involves the experience of promotion and an increase in the difficulty of work tasks undertaken. Employees also have to deal with rivalry from co-workers seeking similar goals. Career versus non-work time allocation conflicts begin to materialise and there is usually a desire to see changes at work that are considered important.

The Maintenance stage can be a complex and confusing period as people reorganise their thinking about themselves in relation to work, the people they care for and the community. They may be conscious of and apprehensive about perceived competition from colleagues and subordinates for similar jobs or even their own position. Ambitions require adjustment and this process of thinking can be characterised by loneliness, even when close family relationships exist. Eagerness to implement change becomes less urgent and employees consider the dangers of failure and loss of respect from colleagues before acting on or withdrawing proposals. The main clue to identifying whether the Maintenance stage has been reached is when the new learnings in our job are no longer as stimulating or of more than peripheral interest to the individual.

The Decline stage beckons if the conclusions from the maintenance stage are not clear or are ignored. Many realign their career directions and so avoid this stage. Others, aware of considerable inner discord, persevere in familiar job surroundings but are concerned that their waning enthusiasm for this kind of work will be spotted by those who have power over their 'fate'. Some people are able to traverse this stage comfortably by making the effort to consolidate their career, not seeking higher risk positions but shifting from a power role to one of consultation and guidance to others. Expanding activities in the community outside the employment environment can facilitate this process. Without such adjustments, people are in the danger zone of, for example, declining self-esteem, waning performance of job tasks and at the risk of being fired or retrenched. At its worst, psychosomatic symptoms occur such as sleeplessness, increased irritability, sometimes an increase in alcohol, pills or tobacco intake.

A more concise way of describing career life cycles is to say that in the beginning we are ambitious and keen to make it to a position of significance. This is followed by trying to maintain the position we have reached. The final phase is when we come to the conclusion that we will choose to do only the things which give us personal satisfaction and that the opinions of others are less important or can be ignored. What we value in our careers does change over time.

The rate at which people traverse the career life cycle and change their career directions has been escalating in the past decade. It is likely that a teenager today will experience five or more distinct career changes before he or she retires from the work force. Some will not retire, but continue working until death because they derive satisfaction from the nature of their worklife activities.

It is unlikely that any single activity will keep me happy in the long term. About three years is the maximum before I feel the need for a change.

The joy of work

The attitudes that prevail in our society are incongruent with what I have learned about the joy of finding fulfilling work. The view that one should not work too hard or too much; that enjoyable times in living are reserved for weekends or vacations; that work is drudgery and thankless; that bosses are necessary for telling me how I am doing; that one is one person at work and a different person outside work. I find my work a joy. I believe others can do so with the right amount of personal effort. Persistence, stubbornness, and gritty determination characterise this effort. I believe that our economy can benefit from people finding this joy and working enthusiastically and more productively.

Work for me is a creative experience, a deeply valuable pursuit. It has hardships, setbacks, and irritations but these are less of a bother to me. My energy levels are consistently high. I amaze myself by the amount of work I accomplish. I am working at what I really enjoy. Time with my family, trips to the countryside are scheduled into my day, not set aside to a specific period in each year. Work is an activity which allows me to use the more truthful parts of me . . . the real self. The present concerns me more than the future. Work is a fulfilling expression of who I really am. The pressures, time demands and fluctuating financial circumstances are part of this joy. None is pleasurable in isolation, but as part of the whole scheme of things are an integral part of this experience.

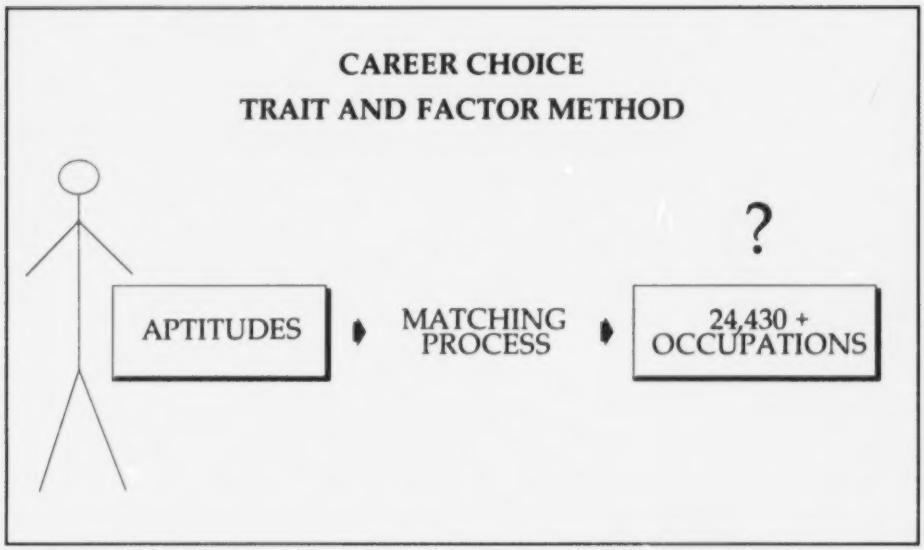
Work provides me with a synergy of the skills I prefer using; there are many skills I have, and used well in the past . . . which I no longer use, nor want to. I am being selfish in what I do and in turn feel selfless in the benefits of my work to others. I am well aware of my weaknesses, but do not dwell on them. I work with my strengths. I am not ever angry about my work, but rather it is the avenue through which I express my developing personality. I express my positive emotions through what I do. I am determined to do what I choose to do even though financial rewards beckon from other directions. Yes, I am addicted to my worklife. I do not crave for status nor approval from others. When it occurs, I enjoy the feeling but do not consciously seek it. I am not conceited about finding work I really like doing. I paid a price to reach this state. I earned the right to be joyful in what I do.

I know I have not reached the description which follows of a person totally satisfied with their worklife written so eloquently by Marsha Sinetar in *Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow* (Dell/Bantam 1987), but I do know I am well on the way, while assisting people on the same journey:

> The traits found in common in the vocationally integrated, actualising personality are:
>
> * The individual possesses a firm sense of identity, can stand alone, be alone. He is fully present in the moment and his work.
> * The individual is able to and willing to consciously choose to do his work, and this very ability to make conscious choices, to take the consequences for the choice, is precisely the mark of his maturity, his inward strength, his independent, whole personality and at the same time is one of the elements which activates his future growth.
> * His choices are a prerequisite to his feeling that he has power, that he can 'create', that he has options, that he can make a difference, that his actions—however slight—matter, if only in his eyes. Again, it is from these attitudes and from his values that the individual gains the strength to contribute stability and something from within himself to the world.
> * At his best, the individual is truly himself, more completely authentic and integrated as a personality and thus is able to bring the complex of his full, entire self to the work at hand. As a result he has more to give through his working efforts than the one who withholds attention, talents or loyalty or who is working 'just to earn a living', or merely to make ends meet. He has more to give because he has a completely integrated self to give.
> * Work becomes a devotion, a labour of love, and indeed—whatever the person himself might call it—a spiritual exercise because the individual's concentrative powers, his choices, actions and values, are motivated, prompted and fuelled by love, and his service, as it were, is simply the enactment of this positive life-force. His being or essential self lives in all he does.

Career development theory

There is as yet no single comprehensive theory, or model, that explains all the factors of how a person—teenager or adult—can be reliably



'matched' to a specific career. Career development theory is a young science. The findings to date are more of the nature of collected observations and regularities, not always consistent with each other.

Career Development is therefore a multi-theory science; no single theory has an absolute majority of agreement among researchers and career counselling practitioners. Despite this disparity of views career development theories do have the useful function of helping us to organise the empirical observations of how people's careers are chosen and develop.

Two quite divergent approaches to career development theories have been developing for some time. The one with the longest history may be termed the matching of people with the content of jobs.

The general focus of this procedure is to determine the skill, aptitude and temperament requirements of particular occupations and match these with the characteristics of the individual.

The development of psychometric testing originates from this approach and provides standardised measures to assist this assessment process. It assumes that individual differences in ability and personality can be systematically related to the variations in occupational categories. Also, that workers in different occupations will have different psychological attributes and their adjustment to work is maximised where attributes and job demands are matched accurately. In the past decade, however, the use of measures of intelligence, aptitude and temperament in career guidance has declined and a number of studies

have challenged the notion that psychometric test data can adequately predict occupational success, satisfaction and work performance.

The main premise for those researchers and counsellors that favour the trait and factor job matching approach is that there exists one ideal job for each person and that people's interests and abilities do not change over time. These two factors are, the theorists maintain, most responsible for career choice and satisfaction. If special talents, levels of ability and intelligence are measured the process is merely a matching with an occupation which fits.

The opposing career guidance approach places much more emphasis on counselling as a skill and the self-search effort required of the individual and less on the 'interpret, tell and sell' practices of the other. It demands skill in enabling the person to solve their own problems rather than providing the answers.

The objective of this is to enable people to make worklife decisions for themselves. The key difference is the view that vocational choice, adjustment and coping is a lifelong process. Self-concepts change, preferences alter, and the initial career choice is unlikely to be sustained throughout a working lifetime. Individuals may wish to initiate a change of occupation and/or nature of employment environment; or, through necessity, they may need to learn and apply career change techniques more than once. The main emphasis is on helping people to learn how to assemble the necessary data about themselves, make career decisions, establish effective work relationships and, when appropriate, be successful at attaining promotion, transfer or an alternative employer. The underlying theme is that career choice and decision making are not concerned with a single life event but with a continual process of personal change and learning.

Career development literature over the past decade has contributed to the growth of understanding of career issues in a person's total living in the social and cultural context in which that life is being lived. There are several researchers and writers who have contributed significantly to the current level of knowledge about career development. These are the vocational guidance approach (John Holland), human resource planning (Alan Walker, David Hall), human potential movement (Howard Figler), women and minorities rights, and life/career stages movement (Daniel Levinson and Donald Super). In addition there are other recognised authorities such as Anne Roe's Need Theory of Career Development, Ed Schein's Career Anchors, Eli Ginzberg's and Dupe's Development Theories, Joseph Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory, Richard N. Bolles' and John Crystal's

Transferable Skills and Job Targeting approach, Bernard Haldane's Success Factors, Arthur Miller's Motivated Abilities and Alan Tredeman's Theory of Career Decision Making.

I have attempted to illustrate the more well-known writers and their theories in the following chart. There are several other less well-known writers of career development theories and approaches I have not mentioned.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORIES

PERSON—SITUATION MATCH

- Trait and Factor (Darley/Patterson)
- Determinants of Choice (Holland)
- Childhood, Personality and Choice (Roe/Bordin)
- Heredity, Self-Concept and Occupation Awareness (Wisconsin Model)

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Developmental Choice and Age Dependent (Ginzberg)
- Development, Life Stage and Self-Concept (Super)
- Interpretation of Experiences and Transferable Skills (Crystal)
- Self-Awareness and Career Stages (Tiedman/O'Hara)
- Social Learning and Personality (Krumboltz)
- Career Anchors and Life Stages (Schein)

The career theories based on what can be termed a sociological perspective maintain that career choice and subsequent career progress is a social process. Nature of schooling, family socio-economic background, influence of family members and close friends, and the expectations a person evolves from them are seen as the prime determinants of occupational choice, level of attainment and what prompts a person to make a career change or career path re-alignment.

The career transition experience

My work in worklife counselling favours the sociological approach. Yet the career transitions my clients take do not conform to the pattern of one particular career development theory. My observation is that career actions are more likely to be prompted by unexpected events or non-events in a person's living. In fact, as much as 70 per cent of my clients initiate career review and subsequent actions leading to some form of career content change as a result of a setback of a negative nature in their worklife or their personal circumstances outside their employment environment. The minority initiate career review as a self-help measure and plan their career horizons when their worklife is relatively satisfactory. Where I do find correlation with the career development theorists is that the concept of a career being continually 'upwardly mobile', in other words of a linear nature leading to more responsibility with each career action, is not true for the majority of people at work.

Consequently, I define a career as a sequence of work experiences paid and unpaid which:

- Requires an activist approach;
- Incorporates your task preferences;
- Has elements of well researched risk taking;
- Includes self-set goals and schedules;
- Obtains feedback from others;
- Necessitates self-evaluated performance;
- Provides psychological success;
- Combines characteristics external to you with changing factors within you;
- Should be a continuous adventure.

Observing hundreds of people grappling with their career dilemmas and progress towards choosing between a number of alternative career action options, I notice both external and internal characteristics are included, such as:

External (Visible to Others): Occupational title . . . Pay . . . Employment benefits . . . Location . . . Status . . . Influence over others . . . Ability . . . Career Direction . . . Behavioural style . . . Lifestyle.

Internal (Private to the Person): Self-concept . . . Hopes . . . Goals . . . Values . . . Motivation . . . Transferable skills . . . Preferences . . . Feelings . . . Frustration . . . Expected events . . . Unexpected events . . . Non-Events . . . Relationships . . . Perceived expectations of others.

Personal career management is the process whereby we manage well or poorly the interdependence of these external and internal characteristics which undergo continual change. Critical to this is the need for an adequate knowledge of self. Everything we need to know to resolve feelings of dissatisfaction already exists within us. The challenge is to identify reliable methods of taking stock of each of the factors of our internal self and relate them in a systematic way to the external characteristics. Hence, we, more than employers, create and maintain attitudes which lead to a deeper sense of annoyance, sometimes bitterness, and feelings of being trapped in a particular career situation unless we undertake as part of the career transition journey this essential self-exploration.

There are several beliefs which influence the methods which I use in assisting others with this self-exploration. In summary they are:

- It is important for people to plan their futures;
- A life plan should retain flexibility. For example, it is likely that the students leaving secondary education this year will change careers an average of 5.2 times during their working lifetime. Those currently in their forties are part of a generation making an average of 2.8 distinct changes from one occupation to another during their employment life;
- People need to develop the ability to overcome career-related setbacks; they should not hesitate to seek out guidance facilities when they experience job loss, career direction confusion, or knowledge deficiencies. Pride can inhibit a person seeking such help, as they may have been taught that they should solve such dilemmas themselves;
- All will perceive some form of constraint to their career progress. These constraints are likely to include one or more of the following: poor health, wrong socio-economic origin, inadequate/inappropriate education, gender stereotyping, wrong age, excessive commitments to non-work circumstances, poor self-concept, geographical location restrictions;

- Learning the skills of career transition and career management is an integral part of total personal development;
- Self-knowledge is critical for successful decision making;
- If people are to derive satisfaction from their work they must have a sense of accomplishment. Among other things, this implies that they need to be familiar with valid self-assessment and goal-setting techniques. Without a clearly defined target there will be no sense of accomplishment when it is reached. In fact, the person will not know they have reached it;
- Though the match between occupation and person may be accurate, the employment environment in which the job is carried out may not be suitable. Many will experience such negative job elements as feelings of being in a rut, undervalued or over-stretched, apparently closed doors to advancement, or uncongenial supervision and/or co-workers;
- Though the match with occupation and the employment environment may both be accurate, an inability to incorporate their needs and interests outside the work situation may inhibit satisfaction with their career choice;
- People need to have, and maintain in the face of constant change, an accurate knowledge of occupations suitable for their uniqueness.

Community resources

Given these assumptions, the availability of trained help is necessary for the satisfactory functioning of society. It is disturbing, therefore, for a Federal Government-commissioned study of career guidance resources and practices to report in 1985:

> The meanings of guidance and counselling vary considerably between States and systems. As descriptions of activities in different settings, whether these are schools or other places, they do not imply uniformity or similarity of activity. In other words, these terms signify a host of possible or actual practices that do not share what might be regarded as an internal logic or coherence.

The career transition assistance resources within Australia do not meet the volume of need. The Public Sector endeavours to provide some services but these are not matched by efforts on the part of employers, individuals or entrepreneurs. A cursory glance at editions of the *Yellow*

Pages shows the imbalance between the many placement agencies who expect the job seeker to have career goals sorted out before contact, and the less prolific vocational guidance providers. In New South Wales 732 licences are held by employment agency proprietors. Only twelve counsellors in private practice are engaged in worklife guidance and counselling.

The stimuli for Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity developments and associated legislation have prompted many employers to establish in-company counselling and training resources relating to career transitions. Because of the source of this stimulation many of these efforts are focused on minority groups. Few companies provide confidential career counselling facilities independent of boss-subordinate relationships, and encourage their use by all staff regardless of age, sex, personal situation, status, or stage in career. Where many Career Development in-company training courses exist examination reveals that they are more likely to be orientated towards job seeking. They frequently omit to train participants in the career review and career targeting process which should precede it and, consequently, often result in job seeking for an alternative position or employer not being the appropriate action to take. Hence, they are incorrectly titled as Career Development.

There are substantial records of career-related research findings developed overseas and a growing number within Australia which indicate reliable associations between individual characteristics, social circumstances and work/living patterns. Furthermore, data on career change factors, redeployment practices, careers after formal retirement, dual career family issues, coping with redundancy, mature-age occupational trends and emerging careers for the next century, and so on, exist and deserve to be considered for wider use within this country.

More effective procedures are required so that these developments can be reviewed, validated, and adapted for local use. The published works of Robert Rapoport, Richard Bolles, Sidney Fine, John Holland, Paula Robinson, Gail Sheehy, Anne Roe, Marlys Hanson, Howard Figler, S.Norman Feingold, John Crystal, Beverly Kaye, Eli Ginzberg, Donald Super and Ed Schein are some of the valuable sources for those concerned about this subject. Many other authors are cited in this book as signposts to readers who wish to explore this subject area in greater depth.

Part Two: Managing Worklife Transitions

Personal responsibility • Willingness to risk • Time • Three-dimensional approach • The real facts about goals • Career success • Structured career analysis • Biographical review • Self-assessment • Opportunity awareness • Decision learning • Transition training • Career transition pitfalls • Mood control • Lack of focus • Research interviews • Reality testing • Career transition loneliness • Need for a coach or mentor • Pressure from others • Underestimating job-seeking complexity • Criteria for promotion • Surviving worklife politics • Career plateau • Checking progress • Journey's end

Personal responsibility

I have a good idea, and then think of a million ways of why I can't do it.

We didn't ask to be born or to whom. Yet now we are here it's common sense to make the best of life's journey. How we do this is in our own hands. It's a matter of good self-management and should not be left to the elusiveness of luck. If fortunate events help us along that's a bonus. Just as we take out insurance to guard against the unpredictable, so personal career review and goal setting strengthens our resourcefulness to cope with the unexpected and non-events (i.e. those that were anticipated but did not occur). Skills and strategies for managing our career and personal self can be learned. It is not being personally responsible to say to oneself "I can't. I shouldn't." P.G. Wodehouse expressed it differently: "Of all sad words of tongue and pen the saddest are these, 'It might have been'."

Our personal identity is related to our goals. This means that as we search for our worklife goals we are also searching for the real self. Lacking a sufficiently clear and detailed self-assessment, people often put themselves in new situations no better suited to them.

They are in fact experimenting by trial and error. It is much more satisfactory to learn how to develop a vision of the kind of job content, employment environment and life style you should be seeking than be diverted into 'interesting' opportunities which do not really suit. The answer to our inner well-being cannot come simply from responding to enticing recruitment advertisements or from the persuasive tone of a consultant within an employment agency.

"I do not get any recognition from my boss for what I do"—is the most common reason I hear for dissatisfaction from work, whether from participants in a workshop or a client in counselling. These people are: one, failing to acknowledge that one's self-evaluation is many more times more important than the opinion of others and two, that they would not need so much the acknowledgement of their efforts from others if they analysed what they want to do in a job and the criteria for measuring their effectiveness and personal growth within it. Time and time again I notice that people have a way of siding against themselves. They align themselves with the appraisal of others. Their self-worth in their career situation is dependent on the opinion of people where they work.

This is a sign that the person has done insufficient self-analysis of their real needs in their worklife or of determining their own self-concept. What is needed is to learn more about how to strengthen ourselves from within—not discount our own perceptions of how we are doing when others voice an opinion or we interpret their lack of feedback negatively.

We are responsible for our own degree of satisfaction. There are always options available if we are willing to take charge of our lives and set out to improve things. There are always ways to overcome obstacles and constraints. By setting worklife goals we are not only meeting our own responsibility for life management but also demonstrating to others that it is a worthwhile activity. The value to our partner—the significant other—in our lives, our children, those we care about, is hard to assess precisely, but few would deny that there is some residual benefit conveyed to them by our example in accepting personal responsibility for our career satisfaction and taking the necessary actions.

> This is the beauty of choosing the right livelihood. As people honour the actions they value most—by doing them—they become more authentic, more reliable, more self-disciplined. They grow to trust themselves more; they listen to their inner voice as a

steady, truthful and strengthening guide for what to do next and how to do it.

Marsha Sinetar in *Do What You Love, The Money Will Follow* (Dell/Bantam 1987)

DIAGNOSING CAREER REVIEW NEED

There can be many reasons for considering a review of your worklife. It's important to isolate your particular reason, or reasons, so that you focus on what really requires a career improvement action. Here is a check-list to assist you:

	Tick (✓)
• Redundancy due to technological or organisation change	☐
• To reduce stress, which is proving to be upsetting	☐
• Wish for a new lifestyle	☐
• Need for new stimulation following a family trauma, such as divorce or death of a loved one	☐
• Desire to improve knowledge and education	☐
• New career options through increased availability of tertiary education, technical change, economic shifts in demand and supply, etc	☐
• Realisation that current career has limited prospects	☐
• Significant change in health	☐
• Change in family needs	☐
• Escape from monotonous occupation; need for a new challenge	☐
• Compulsory early retirement regulations in the current occupation	☐
• Preparation for relocation from city to country living, or vice versa	☐

All the separate achievements in a period of career re-assessment combined to produce in me a profound, personal revolution; together they built self-esteem and a sense of direction for my life. I grew, or pushed myself, out of a life pattern of depression, lassitude, and anxiety—my greatest achievement of my life to date.

Willingness to risk: Managing a worklife transition is about identifying the risks which are worth taking. Our past provides us with examples of both inappropriate and worthwhile risk taking actions. It just takes hard work to remember, evaluate and reflect on the results which occurred and learning from our experiences with taking such risks. Whatever trauma we have experienced in the past in our education, personal life or previous employment, it is important to recognise that it can distort our ability to focus on the present and future. It is likely that others will refer frequently to our past, particularly selection interviewers, promotion panels or managers at performance appraisal reviews. The possibility of disappointment or rejection by others does exist and can never be fully eliminated.

But the arousal of feelings of inadequacy about education or 'inappropriate' work experience or past career setbacks must be guarded against. They must not be allowed to deter us from striving to achieve new objectives. The fact that the past is past and cannot be changed must be incorporated in how we react. To be aware that the past has the power to poison our attitudes, behaviour at work and responses to the criticisms of others can help us guard against it halting or hindering progress with our careers. The past is what we build on—not despair about. What matters is where we are going, not where we have been.

> *This isn't just about changing jobs but facing up to who I am and the realities around that.*

Time: The further we progress in a career, extend family responsibilities, the less time there seems to be to evaluate whether we are going in the right direction. Time is also essential to appraise whether we are with the most appropriate employer for furthering our career. In fact, in a busy worklife, time has probably come to seem the greatest obstacle to accomplishing many things important to our inner well-being—not only the management of a career.

For too many, career action decisions are taken in a hurry. The lure of a recruitment advertisement, an enticement from an employment agency or a disappointing performance review from the boss too frequently precipitate the decision to change employment circumstances.

It is a shame that many of us feel guilty about taking time to contemplate the quality of our work and living activities. Many feel that this is a form of self-indulgence—a selfish act—and, for this reason,

unhealthy. How many worklife problems would be solved and career satisfaction advanced if more individuals could find the courage to reduce their diary commitments, allocate time for self and process their thoughts before continuing with the hectic pace of modern-day employment activity.

Any self-assessment process requires a great deal of time, energy and discipline. Career and personal self-review should not be rushed. The answers which occur quickly are often not the most valid nor the most useful.

SAMPLE OF A PERSON'S THREE-DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS SUMMARY

JOB CONTENT

- Varied, non routine
- Creative
- Some analysis/problem solving
- Worthwhile results—social value
- Some flexibility (not straight 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- Assisting others
- Some teaching/training component
- Some individual (one-to-one) in-depth dealings
- Adventure/excitement
- Opportunity for personal growth (self and knowledge)
- Challenge
- Dealing with a broad range of people
- Opportunity for individual expression

EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT

- Non bureaucratic
- Open/common goals
- Variable location of job tasks (not stuck in the office)
- Small rather than large organisation
- Private rather than public service
- Dealing with people (group and individual)
- Offers some independence (creating opportunities)
- Not have to conform to the 'executive image' (at least not all the time)
- Developing ideas with others—sharing approaches
- Being able to make a deal (something I can believe in)

LIFESTYLE PREFERENCE

- Work/leisure balance (time for the family)
- Probably smaller city environment (more relaxed)
- Not suburbia—a little 'alternative'
- A sense of community
- Variable work time
- Being able to share some common goals
- Being in charge of my own destiny
- Reduced stress and anxiety levels
- Perhaps involving significant other or sharing some venture
- Definitely not conforming to the upwardly mobile successful urban family unit

I am not interested in the struggle for ascendancy which involves good ideas being cast aside because someone feels threatened, or the current fashion is to do it differently.

Three-dimensional approach: The process of identifying an individual's appropriate occupation and career path has more complexity than simply identifying aptitudes, that is, the skills to perform a particular job and level of intelligence. Career analysis necessitates a three-dimensional approach with focus on each of the following in turn: Job Content, Employment Environment and Lifestyle Needs. Once this data has been assembled for each of these the task of integrating the indicators from each into a coherent career direction is addressed. When this has been carried out and relevant decisions made, the examination, choice and implementation of a specific career strategy takes place.

A person's career lies between lifestyle and job content. The job content is a specific set of tasks containing some which are preferred and others tolerated or demoralising. The employment environment is as important as job content because these factors affect the psychological aspects of work such as degree of independence, self-concept, security and interpersonal relationships with work colleagues and management. A career, however, will affect most, even all, of a person's life. The job content and employment environment largely determine the standard of living, including where we live, our recreational activities, schools our children attend, and clothing and transportation choices. The actions a person takes to enhance these

aspects of their living is career development. It is not limited or confined to job content or employment environment. Each person has internal and external characteristics which cause them to be satisfied or dissatisfied in relation to each of these three dimensions of job content, employment environment and lifestyle needs.

The external characteristics are: Occupational title, job title provided by an employer (may differ from the first), remuneration, prestige, status, location, commuting to and from workplace, degree of influence with others, evidence of career path(s) traversed to date. The internal characteristics are: Self-concept, goals, aspirations, values, feelings, satisfaction, anger, disappointment, philosophy of life, view of age and health.

Each of us has an individual world created around our view of self. This inward view of ourselves gives each of us our personal perspective on the world around us. The events occurring in the outside world, whether work, family or other happenings, are interpreted by the current state of our inner world or view of self. Some call this inner world our self-concept. Just as events are occurring outside us—a continual series of changes—so too our inner world is changing. Our view of these external events, therefore, changes as our sense of self changes and we modify our inward view as these changes take place.

The true nature of our career, that is, its meaning for our inner world, may not be the same for those who observe us, whether they are our loved ones, boss, counsellors, employment consultants or relatives. For example, if we are promoted at work, others are likely to view this event as an indicator of success. But inwardly we may view it as costing dearly in terms of our desire to have more time for personal projects of a non-work nature. Being retrenched may appear to others as a setback while our inner self may feel relief that we no longer work in a particular set of work situations.

> *I have discovered that a good job is secondary to a good life. Enjoyment comes from yourself and from your attitudes to job and life, not just from what you do for a living.*

Our career—even further, our life—is the outcome of our inner self's responses to the interaction between these external and internal forces. The choices, decisions and emotional investments we make in work, family and other areas shape the overall nature of our living. Because neither we nor the environment stays still, changes in both influence, alter and sometimes disturb our viewpoint. Both major and minor

changes can disrupt the balance. A new accommodation needs to be made. A redefinition of self and the external world is required in order to restore comfort to our living and a sureness that the actions we take are really right for us. New assessments, an expanded awareness of strengths, skills, preferences and value systems need to be made. Hence, our career is a sequence of alternating stable and transitional phases.

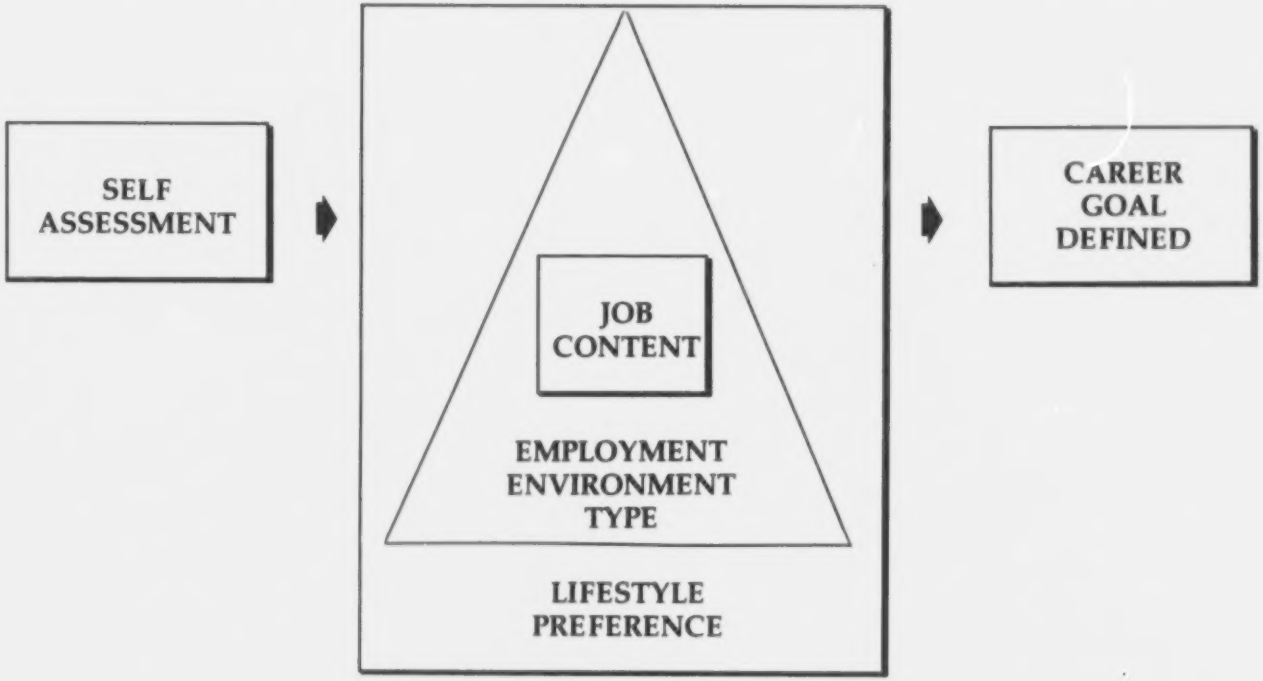
To deal effectively with these transitional phases we need to pause regularly and take stock. Many of us do not take this pause. As individuals we are often uncomfortable in changed, unbalanced situations and seek quickly to reduce the discomfort of our thoughts. We often take the first job offer made if we are out of work. With the loss of inner identity in a job or career path with a particular employer and the future we anticipated within it abruptly gone, we are prone to urgency in attempts to replace what we have lost. The sense of self, fractured by our external world, needs healing before rational decision making can take place. But rarely do we give this a chance. We tend to want to bring the present uncomfortable phase to a close as soon as possible by accepting any option available to us.

Our data gathering must relate to each of the three dimensions, include an assessment of our internal and external characteristics and be integrated with the career self-help action we must then take if worklife improvement is genuinely desired. In other words, we need to recognise that we, not others, are accountable for our own work satisfaction. The focus towards a specific career goal is in recognition that there are too many worklife alternatives in society for all to be examined. So, although information gathering about alternatives is essential, the time and resources to explore all options is rarely possible: therefore, at some point a decision is made and action taken relating to it.

The real facts about goals

I list and document just about everything I do. How I surf and train, what I eat, when I go to bed and wake up. It takes me ages to make a decision, but when I do it is the right one because I go through such a rigid process to get there.

(World Surfing Champion, Barton Lynch)


SELF ASSESSMENT
JOB CONTENT
EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT TYPE
LIFESTYLE PREFERENCE
CAREER GOAL DEFINED

We may hesitate about making worklife goals for several reasons. Our record in the past may indicate that it has been a waste of time; events over which we had no control took over and stopped them being fulfilled. The demands on our time by others may give us little hope that, having set goals, we will be able to implement them. Making a living, attending to family needs, caring for others, commuting, surviving in our job, managing staff and work in progress, keeping the boss happy and many other factors crowd our waking hours.

Despite all these inhibitors, it is an established fact that people who set well thought-out goals convey an aura of purpose about their living, project a more confident self and smile more.

What makes them so different? What secrets of goal setting have they discovered? Whether by research, an experiment, a training experience or by chance, they have learnt how to set realisable goals. The secrets are not very mysterious or complicated. In fact, they are:

- Goals Must Be Your Very Own
- Goals Must Be Written Down
- Goals Must Be Consistent With Your Values, Interests and Abilities
- Goals Must Be Clearly Defined So You Know When They Are Reached
- Goals Must Be Both Short Term and Long Term
- Goals Must Be Realistic and Attainable
- Goals Must Be Thought Through To Their Consequences
- Goals Help to Identify Obstacles In Advance
- Goals Help to Solve Problems Encountered Along the Way
- Reinforcement for Goal-achieving Behaviour Must Be Planned and Scheduled; this should take the form of personal rewards to mark each stage of achievement

Remember, goals don't have to be new. It is quite appropriate for someone setting worklife goals to include certain activities they enjoy doing now, so that they are sure to allow time for them in the future.

Why do I want to change careers? I wanted my 'old' career, but once you accomplish what you set out to do, it's often not what it is cut out to be—so I will just let go of it.

Career success

A formula provides a structure for our self-review which precedes goal setting, disciplines the focus of our thinking and enables us to make sense of the complex factors which are within our psychological make-up. A formula helps us not only identify what is important within each aspect of our lives but how important those aspects are.

M + V + T - PC = Career Success

C. Brooklyn Derr, author of *Managing The New Careerists* (Jossey-Bass 1987) researched and developed a formula for helping people who sought his help concerning career confusion. The formula helps people to explore certain facts about themselves and to incorporate this information in a coherent way which will lead to improved understanding and comfort with choosing a particular career action. The formula comprises M for Motives. V for Values. T for Talents (or Skills or Competencies). PC for Perceived Personal Constraints.

M = Motives is about establishing what are our primary wants at the current stage of our living. In my book, *Stop Postponing the Rest of Your Life*, in the structured analysis exercise entitled Your Personal Wants, I list 49 from which I ask for the ten most important to you in your next career action to be selected. V = Values helps focus on what a person values most. There are a variety of diagnostic aids to assist in sorting this out. One I use in my counselling activities provides a choice of 41 individual values and requires that eight are selected as primary choices and ten as secondary choices. Values do alter in peripheral ways from day to day but at the core of ourselves our values are stable over the years. Most of our primary and secondary values will continue to guide our choices throughout our lives. But first we need to be clear on what our values truly are. T = Talents, skills, competencies. The search for all our skills and, in turn, for those we prefer to use is a major component of career analysis. Many researchers claim that each of us have more than 600 skills. In my experience I have seen this proven many times. The difficulty is the individual's resistance to the hard work of identifying all of them. The first 25 are easy to identify. The next hundred increasingly difficult. Others may need to be 'recruited' to assist in identifying the rest. PC = Perceived Personal Constraints, which feature in all of our lives. Listing them is important. Then the individual items can be examined in detail as to the degree of the constraint and a conclusion reached as to whether

it is really an obstacle or one that can be circumnavigated by the selection of a particular strategy.

Structured career analysis

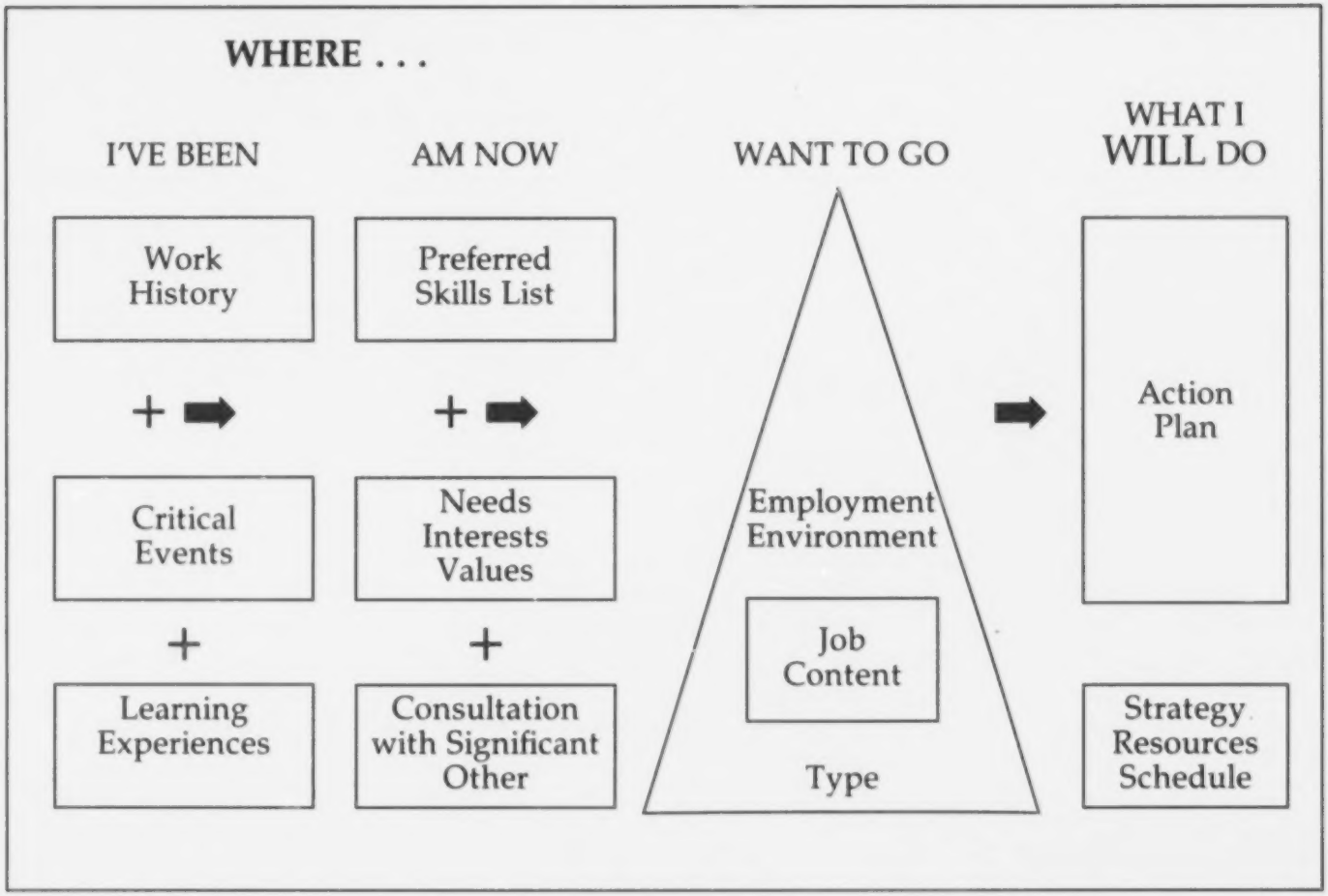
Derr's formula is very useful in personal career decision making but is not sufficiently comprehensive to allow for all the information a person needs in making work and life management decisions. Over the years I have developed a formula for taking people through the whole journey of self-exploration and evaluation of their options through to the successful implementation of their choice. In simplified form it is SA + OA + DL + TT = Worklife Satisfaction.

SA for Self-Assessment, OA for Opportunity Awareness, DL for Decision Learning, TT for Transition Training.

It is foolish to re-invent the wheel or ignore the wide variety of wheels that already exist. So the formula incorporates the hard work of previous researchers and career development practitioners and their composite output of career decision-making approaches and systematic career counselling processes. But, like an artisan I have added to and refined the wheels. I have rejected what has not worked to my standards of human care provision and discovered some nuts and bolts not previously invented. In particular, what I did discover was that many formulae designed to help a person neglected the implementation difficulties once a career action had been satisfactorily identified. Also, that several formulae researched and designed within an academic environment failed my tests when applied to the realities of worklife. While originating in career development theory, my formula has an essentially practical approach which incorporates most, if not all, of the aspects of a person's work and living.

As we are so complex as human beings there is a need for a structure to analyse our particular situation and put order into our thoughts and conclusions. Then, to plan and carry out action steps to alter a worklife situation which is proving unsatisfactory. I have developed the structure SA + OA + DL + TT over years of helping others resolve their worklife difficulties, and I refined it as I have observed my clients' journey through it. It is a rational step-by-step approach which is not just an intellectual task but incorporates the emotional, cognitive, and psychological process that involves the total person and the environment in which their living is carried out.

A structure for our thinking and writing is also required which will


WHERE . . .
I'VE BEEN
AM NOW
WANT TO GO
WHAT I WILL DO
Work History
Preferred Skills List
Critical Events
Needs Interests Values
Learning Experiences
Consultation with Significant Other
Employment Environment
Job Content
Type
Action Plan
Strategy Resources Schedule

prevent us dwelling unnecessarily on negative experiences. The myriad of facts . . . experiences . . . of our past living need to be segmented. Clues may be buried in the depths of our memory; even our subconscious. A structure will prise them out into the open for considered review and evaluation of their values for incorporation in our career planning and subsequent career actions.

What follows has proved satisfactory to hundreds of people, though I am sure that, as I continue to learn through my clients' experiences, both individual and organisational, the structure will undergo further refinement. I am conscious of the fact that because of the complexity of career management there are many variables affecting our worklife decisions that are as yet insufficiently explored.

You will remember from your school-day training in algebra and statistics that formulae are only as useful as finding the right data to put into the equation. To work out what data to put into the formula let us look more closely at its components. The structure has four steps and within each step there are a number of activities. It is necessary to proceed through these four discrete steps and in the sequence described. To change this sequence will jeopardise the validity and success of the outcomes. But first a comment on the first step: Self-Assessment. I include several techniques but there is one which has become known as Biographical Review.

> *What I was not expecting from career assistance was the extent to which I have achieved insights into my own personality and behaviour . . . plus the amazing variety of factors of relevance to my work satisfaction. It has not always been a comfortable experience, reawakening as it did previous and suppressed information. On the other hand, self-esteem has been raised by the identification of positive characteristics and lifestyle factors which have been taken entirely for granted.*

Biographical review: The career analysis technique of biographical review involves writing down a thorough account of most of your worklife experiences and other life events which is, in effect, a retrospective diary. The use of an account of occurrences, feelings and decisions has been practised by individuals for centuries. It is a well proven method of moving to greater self-awareness, expanding creativity and providing a focus for making important decisions. It provides the writer with a great deal of personal power. It also provides a person engaged in helping and supporting the career situation with a review of the essential data on which to base such assistance. It

is reasonable to claim that people make career decisions not at an isolated moment but in the context of a lifetime of experiences, whether aged seventeen, thirty-five or sixty-eight. Elements of the past influence current career difficulties and the perceived constraints on possible solutions.

Biographical Review is designed to help analyse capabilities and preferences in order to plan for a more fulfilling worklife. Those that undertake it need to be prepared to work very hard. The method is thorough and consequently takes considerable time. There will be times when there are temptations to skip over a step or to complete one less than conscientiously. The value is very much affected by how much time, effort and self-honesty is devoted to each step of the process.

It is best to establish a steady pace of so much writing time per day, so many hours per week. It is unwise to set aside a whole day to think and write. Such sustained personal review is exhausting and may distort the recordings.

Most of us learn, really learn, from our own experience—not simply from having things happen to us but from reflecting on what happens so that the meaning of our experiences becomes clear and we can make choices based on the growing awareness rather than unchallenged assumptions. The positive and negative outcomes can be analysed. We can make choices based on this reflection and analysis. Career action steps can be evolved which are based on these facts: 'facts', because they did occur. Career planning derived from a basis of assumptions is not a valid foundation. Hence, people in a career transition situation need to go back in time before they can progress into the future with surety. As we become certain of the basis on which we are planning, so confidence in successful outcomes will naturally grow. The subsequent career improvement action cannot be guaranteed to produce consistent worklife satisfaction. But it can be isolated to the risks that are worth taking . . . not those that are haphazard.

Biographical review puts us in touch with where we are today. Once captured and accepted this data can help us determine where we want to be. None of this is new wisdom. Confucius for one identified this process many centuries ago. It is not sufficient to think earnestly about our past. This thinking must be accompanied by writing down our thoughts. Our thinking needs to be guided along certain paths, otherwise we can become angry, resentful, even despairing.

Your biographical writings are likely to begin tentatively and self-consciously. As you experiment with different styles of recording you

will become more comfortable and words will soon come faster than you can write them down. Some prefer to write complete sentences. Others in point form. I have noticed that those who record on many small cards find it easier to re-arrange the information into broad categories or major findings when the writing is completed. It is a safe place to record what you think about yourself, your work and the events that have been significant in your journey to date through life. Through your biographical review writings you will become aware of how you have been changing and growing, moving through phases and crossroads and the effect they have on your current outlook. A new sense of confidence can occur which is necessary before proceeding to think through and find creative solutions to your worklife dilemmas.

The process of writing suits many of us who prefer to think slowly and carefully about matters which are very important to us. We don't have to defend ourselves to others while we write. You can make spelling, syntax, or grammatical mistakes and it doesn't matter a damn. The content of what you are writing does!

Many people have commented to me that writing a worklife review is like getting in touch with one's inner self. As they record their experiences they can check earlier decisions and evaluate their feelings about people, situations and employment environments. We give power to whatever we focus on when writing, so I encourage my clients to concentrate on the happier moments of their worklife experiences and not to dwell too long on the negative. You should take frequent breaks from the task but not procrastinate about returning to it as the biographical review is a powerful means of realising your own unique true potential.

Harnessing the 'new technology' can assist the whole process. If you are what is loosely called computer literate you can use a word processing program for this task. By scrolling forward and backwards you can add thoughts, considerations, queries at any stage. But you should not go back and change what you have written. If a skilled helper is to be engaged to facilitate the career transition, the counsellor needs to see the routes by which your thoughts are travelling. If you want to record more comments you should simply add them with a note that they reflect a change in your thinking at a later time.

The completion of the biographical review will produce for many new, sometimes surprising, insights into self and its relation to your career and life management issues. For others it will provide a structure to something of which you are already aware. As you review your writings, you will notice the development of information and

worthwhile clues that are realistic. They are realistic because the recording process has allowed you to incorporate thought, imagination, introspection and feelings, along with facts about actual events and their logical analysis.

The adaptation of the biographical review technique to career analysis for adults occurred in the early seventies. A notable example is the elective tuition program for students within the Harvard MBA syllabi. This earned the Exxon award for the most creative course in business management in 1975. Geographically nearby, the late John C. Crystal was introducing the biographical review procedure to clients of his career transition counselling service based in New York. Richard Nelson Bolles worked with John in the design and publication of *Where Do I Go From Here With My Life?* in 1974. Richard also wrote a companion title *What Colour Is Your Parachute?* Reprinted every year since 1972, this book is referred to by most researchers and writers about career transitions. Both emphasise the importance and practicality of including biographical review in the Self-Assessment procedure.

> *I do know that I will take from this writing experience a set of tools and a level of self-awareness (and sensitivity) that will undoubtedly have a profound impact upon my life.*

Now let's examine the formula SA + OA + DL + TT = Career Action, and the activities within each step:

A. SELF-ASSESSMENT (Structured Analysis)

The first task is to assemble large volumes of disparate data and then induce or infer from them patterns or trends from which conclusions can be drawn. The skill which is developed in the process is called inductive logic. The stimuli for considering what needs to be remembered, responded to and recorded are structured analysis questionnaires and the biographical review technique. Reflecting on the past, acting in the present, planning for the future all clearly suggest the fundamental process of learning by doing. The doing is to respond to structured questions, which causes us to examine each of the relevant features of our past and current living that have a bearing on worklife satisfaction as it applies to the uniqueness of our individual selves. It requires a systematic way to think and record information about our worklife and non-work activities. There are three parts to the assembly and interpretation of the self-assessment phase.

1. Information Base

A comprehensive record of education, non-work and employment experiences is assembled, together with personal data relevant to lifestyle and obligations to others. Life-planning aspirations, if already evolved, are highlighted.

2. Abilities and Preferences Analysis

Each person possesses a unique pattern of abilities, interests and preferences. By means of thoroughly researched self-search questionnaires this information is derived and documented. Personal values are clarified. Skills identification is learnt, plus the concept of skills being transferable between occupations and career paths.

3. Work Environment Analysis

Compatibility with different types of employment/occupational environments is examined. Together with the preceding analysis, data is assembled which indicates where the highest performance and most satisfaction will be found in future jobs. The next task is to convert these data inventories into career themes and specific career information-gathering activities.

B. OPPORTUNITY AWARENESS (Identifying the Options)

Opportunity Awareness involves relating the new learning about self and exploring what job and career path options can be matched.

The database of life's experiences has been assembled and thoroughly examined; interpretation has led to the formulation of specific career action steps, and personal confidence has risen through this extended self-awareness. At this stage one of the career transition hazards occurs. Fired by enthusiasm, eager to put into action this self-learning, the client is likely to feel propelled towards implementation. The danger is that the database for action is not yet complete. The career action plans being formulated are draft action plans. They need to be verified. Printed material needs to be obtained from career information resources, employers, professional associations, libraries and tertiary education institutions. In fact, any literature is relevant if it is about the nature

and environment of the proposed career action steps. But the reality of occupations, work environments, courses of study can only be obtained in sufficient depth and volume by identifying, meeting and questioning people who possess this information.

1. Organisational Research

Ways to assess and use all career-related facilities within an organisation are studied. The focus is on practical solutions to personal career needs, compatible with the needs and aims of the employer. The intent is to expand awareness of alternative options for growth and learn how to test possibilities against organisational realities. The concept is introduced: Upwards, by seeking promotion, is not the only way to go. The focus is first on enriching the current position and then planning future career moves.

2. Networking (Research Interviews)

This usually neglected, but most effective, career management strategy is explored and methods researched. How to go about obtaining answers to questions is studied and actioned. This sharpens the self-concept, focuses expectations and recruits others as respected allies and information resources.

3. Reality Testing

When a career action step is evolved and research interviews completed the person is confronted with a choice of next steps. They can either proceed to seek a job where relevant, or implement the action where they work. Alternatively, they can build into their career transition a further check to see whether this direction is really the one which is right for them to take. This involves reality testing; in other words, seeking out opportunities to actually experience the proposed direction. Reality testing will be commented on later.

Two examples of decision learning are printed below to illustrate this particularly difficult phase of career transitions.

C. DECISION LEARNING (How to Prepare for and Make Relevant Decisions)

1. Formulation of Goals/Career Goal Statement

Here all the data from Self-Assessment and Opportunity Awareness is drawn together and assessed. The individual arrives at and records a clear and concise current job career action and future career path objective plus the schedule for its attainment. Personal preparation programs for short- and long-term objectives form an important part of this.

2. Consultation

Rarely does worklife review and career pathing concern only the individual. Emphasis is placed on the involvement of significant people in the person's life and their desires/expectations are incorporated. Where there are conflicts, evidence of how and when to resolve them needs to be incorporated.

3. Mentoring

How to select and recruit a mentor (sometimes termed a coach) is involved. A mentor can observe and identify the critical areas of a career action plan that require refinement, and provide feedback in a way that brings about an improvement in the overall result.

We all need a mentor/coach to bring out our best performance—a person with whom we can share our hopes and disappointments in an unfettered way, and who can review the proposed next step in our career transition.

D. TRANSITION TRAINING (Preparing and Implementing the Desired and Validated Change)

A check on the thoroughness of the preparation is done by using diagnostic questionnaires, such as the examples which conclude this section. They are entitled Auditing Your Career Management Skills and Testing Your Career Transition Skills.

Transition Training can include many skills and information needs relevant to the career action decided. For example:

1. Résumé Design

Résumé design may need to be studied. Several drafts may be produced before final version is selected for use in internal applications such as promotion or transfer, or alternative employer searching.

2. Communications

Specific study on how to improve abilities, confidence and style in communicating with other people within the employment environment, whether by memo, telephone or face-to-face needs to be carried out and tested.

3. Strategy Range Selection

Career action strategies are studied and options recorded and analysed. Once the objective is clear, materials prepared and techniques well rehearsed, the career action is carefully planned with controls to monitor and ensure its successful outcome.

4. Interview Skills

The structure of the interview process, such as Screening, Selection, Panel and Duct, is examined from both interviewer's and applicant's perspectives. Also Career Review and Performance Appraisal discussions with one's current manager are planned and rehearsed. Study of behavioural styles, conversational techniques and body language feature in this.

5. Self-Management Skills

Stress management, testing out the reality of the proposed career action, conflict resolution and negotiating skills are likely to be needed among self-help approaches studied and practised.

6. Rehearsal

(a) Personal Plans Presentation to a Counsellor or Trainer: The individual prepares and makes a presentation to the counsellor or trainer on their career action plans. In the process, each step of the planned campaign is reviewed and audited in order to reduce anxiety and increase confidence. This provides an opportunity to diagnose more learning needs, practise giving and receiving help from peers and identify concerns which need to be addressed further.

(b) Personal Planning without Help: When working alone on a career transition, essentially the same procedure is necessary in order to reduce the risks of the impending career transition to those risks which are worth taking. Use of self-directed materials purchased from publishers or obtained from a counsellor engaged in career assistance helps the person complete the Transition Training on their own.

DECISION LEARNING STAGE: EXAMPLE I

1. My target is:

To re-align my career to satisfy my need to have security and still have room for my own creativity. Careers that open up to me now, which previously seemed to be a closed door, are advertising, media, marketing and customer relations.

—and all similar fields that involve customer liaison, working within groups of people, office services, control of stock, training, and creating and maintaining my own special projects.

I have been feeling that past positions in my career have not been totally satisfying and self-fulfilling. I now have many ideas of the things that were aggravating me. Before, when I felt bored, frustrated and sometimes angry while working, I had no explanation for these feelings, I can now define that feeling as dissatisfaction.

—I have a special need to have a sense of achievement and to be able to reap the rewards from hard work

—I like to be praised for a job well done (I guess that's due to my need for security); it makes me proud of myself and therefore more eager to take on new tasks and to assist others

I need to look for a position within a friendly, and social but competent environment, with a diversity of duties and job

satisfaction, and prefer a business which takes a keen interest in employees and maintains morale. I have found I have a far greater list of skills obtained already in my career than I had previously realised. After evaluating my skills and eliminating those which no longer appeal to me I have produced criteria essential in the position I am looking for.

2. Obstacles that could prevent me from realising my target are:

I'm almost certain I will be employed by my current company for another three months. (I am being retrenched.) So I'm not available to begin new employment until after that. Another obstacle in my career path may be that of no tertiary education. However, I am willing to undertake training courses to further my career. One of the many important factors to me, when starting in a new position, is people—without a friendly environment surrounding me I don't feel I could be content, and this could be a constraint in realising my career target

3. Documentation which I have prepared and intend to use while job seeking: application letters, résumés and covering letters

Besides using an ordinary résumé, I am planning to use a functional résumé (depending on the situation) in order to cater specifically for a particular position, for a career re-alignment. I intend to send a covering letter to introduce and enhance my résumé.

4. Strategies I will use to reach my career goal

I plan to register with a number of recruitment agencies and intend to complete this task when I find available time. I intend also to make use of services and information made available by the Personnel Department and to scan newspapers for potential jobs. As I have no tertiary education, I will indicate I will be keen to accommodate any training courses the employer may wish me to attend.

5. I believe I have sufficient resources to maintain a steady flow of job search activities.

I now feel I have a better knowledge of what career is suitable and if it appeals to me. My referees are reputable and are sure to recommend me highly and in a business-like manner.

DECISION LEARNING STAGE: EXAMPLE II

At this stage of my life, the next position I obtain should be my last full-time job. Although I am far from ready to retire, it is unlikely that I would willingly be involved in another job search. The position must therefore provide me with the necessary interest and challenge to satisfy my needs for 11 years. This could be either by development and growth within the original position, or through definite prospects of promotion. Some degree of security is therefore essential, although I realise this could largely depend on the effort I put in, as well as my performance. The work itself must, in my judgement, be of benefit to myself and others so that I can obtain a sense of achievement and pride in my work. I must be able to relate favourably to the activities and products of the organisation so that I can energetically contribute to its growth and success.

While work takes up a major part of my time and energy, it must co-exist with other important aspects of my life. My home and family are of extreme importance to me, so conflict between my loyalties to them and the job must be avoided as much as practicable.

Location is important inasmuch as I cannot entertain the thought of moving from my present place of residence. The location of the latter is ideal for family pleasure and other activities. The home itself was designed by us and is a deeply rooted part of our lives. The position must therefore be in the Sydney area with easy access to public transport or not more than 20 km by road. The latter could be extended if the job package included a company car. Preferably the location would be City, south to Sutherland or west to Bankstown.

The organisation should be small to medium sized as I prefer close relationships at all levels. I prefer conciliatory management both from my superiors and to my own staff. I have always been able to interact positively with my staff, peers and superiors and those people from other organisations that I meet in the course of my work. I enjoy personal contact and happily work as part of a small energetic team with a shared goal and a co-operative rather than competitive mode of operation. I do not, however, become bored with my own company, so can work alone for long periods where necessary.

As far as the work itself is concerned, my career analysis has shown that I have a middle of the road preference to most job functions. I have a strong preference for practical rather than theoretical aspects—a factor which stands out in my hobbies and off-the-job activities. Consequently, the job does not need to be heavily weighted in the practical area, as my needs are partly catered for in outside pursuits.

As two-thirds of my work to date has been associated with computers it is likely that this would be a dominant aspect of my future work as I must—and want to—capitalise on this experience. The job would probably be either directly in the computer (information services) area or as a very active user of computers such as in production or distribution. My dislike for and lack of experience with figure work precludes finance, but a moderate amount of statistical analysis can hold my interest.

In a management position I would need to have a balance between things and people. My people management style is one of conciliation with empathy, although I can be assertive when necessary. I believe that people do not usually make mistakes on purpose and my attitude is therefore to fix the error as the first priority, followed by co-operative action to avoid repetition.

I still have approximately a quarter of my active working life ahead of me and am anxious to use my skills and experience to the mutual benefit of myself and the organisation that is prepared to give me the opportunity.

Career transition pitfalls

I am filling you in on the vicissitudes of this career change business. I've run the full gamut through elation to depression and no doubt at each stage my equilibrium would have been somewhat different.

There can be many impediments to ongoing career transition activities at this stage in the journey. You may have incomplete information about yourself or your options, or be resisting the conclusion of the evidence you have gathered about yourself and your options. Difficulty making the choice may be experienced. And, understandably, apprehension about the possibility of failure that the implementation of the proposed career action may bring about.

Mood control: Planning and implementing a career transition always involves the expectation of some loss as well as gain, and letting go can be difficult. It helps to remind ourselves of what we have and are moving towards rather than dwell on what will be missing. A client wrote to me from another State some time after her career transition from teaching was completed and expressed this feeling in this way: "I have and still will have to accept the pain, the sense of loss and sadness that goes with letting go of the familiar and that which I have identified myself with for so long."

Keeping physically active is important to this mood control. Brisk walks, projects around the home and a clear-out of outdated clothes help to keep things in perspective and avoid wavering, with the intent to alter the current unsatisfactory worklife situation. Mental clarity is important for achieving a new worklife situation.

> *I believe most people who sit down with Saturday's newspaper recruitment adverts put more thought and planning into their weekend game of golf or tennis than into the next step of their career. I have seen how well their golf and tennis goes, so what hope does their career have?*

Lack of focus: When the career action plan is expressed in writing many think only of what they want and ignore the important aspect of what they can contribute. Mutuality exists in all work relationships and should be acknowledged when communicated verbally and in writing. Here are two examples of inadequate career goal objectives. While the sentiments are earnest both lack precision in the objective:

"To obtain a job in a very different workplace which I will find challenging, exciting and motivating, and that I feel good about doing and committed to pursuing."

"To find a position in which I will be happy to spend my day at and feel as though I have accomplished something and contributed to the satisfaction or feeling of achievement."

While a career action plan should have a focus, placing one's expectations on a move to one specific job is not always wise. This is because the specific job may not be vacant, or even exist, when a person is ready for it. A better strategy is to focus on a career path related to 'job families' and the sequence of skills and knowledge development related to the group of jobs within the job family. Because of the relevance of skills and knowledge to career advancement within job families, these are sometimes referred to as mastery paths rather than career paths.

Consequently, the more effective expression of an objective is orientated to a function rather than to a specific job title or occupational classification. A functional objective refers to the target area within an organisation and includes an expression of the potential benefits to the employer. An example will illustrate this important point: "I am seeking a position within marketing where my experience in sales promotion, supported by creative problem-solving and cost control abilities, will result in profitable decisions and revenue increases."

I have learned something about the tourist industry that makes me feel that it doesn't match up with me . . . it's the glued-on nails and nailed-on hair styles.

Research interviews: Most people in career transition baulk at the prospect of carrying out research interviews because they do not have sufficient faith that people will be prepared to share information, particularly when no payment is involved. They can also hesitate because they doubt their interpersonal skills to elicit this information from strangers. There is no easy way to overcome these apprehensions. Each person needs to experiment before learning that this data is available from other people and will be readily shared.

When people set out on this quest for 'real' information they have several advantages. The most important is that they are 'non-threatening'. They are not approaching a person who has the information they need for a decision, a job offer, for money or anything other than their time. Second, most people respect others who are taking care about their career planning, and to declare this early to the prospective information giver is most important. We do like talking about what we do. People like to give advice. They're flattered to be asked for their opinion. Do not deprive research interview prospects of the pleasure of talking about themselves! I have written in my other publications about the strategies to secure research interviews and provided examples of request and thank you letters specifically for this purpose. *How to Network and Select a Mentor* (1988) and *Stop Postponing the Rest of Your Life* (3rd Edition, 1989) contain more details of this procedure. From the data obtained through research interviews a person will be in a better position to evaluate proposed career action steps in relation to their own needs and determinations for enhancing their career.

Reality testing: The acceptance of the career action choice is a strategic milestone in career transitions. It is wise, when reaching this stage, to pause and enjoy the experience for a few days. This allows you to strengthen commitment towards the implementation stage. It will also allow time to practise providing reasons to others with whom you may share your resolution. For some, lingering doubts may need some period for reality testing. One form of reality testing is to seek temporary employment in a work situation closely resembling the career action goal. This may be achieved by taking extended leave from the current occupation and seeking casual or temporary employment in the targeted alternative. Sometimes opportunities can be found to experience the alternative through evening or weekend work and, by these means, not leave the current occupation until the experience has been evaluated.

In my experience, I have found too few people prepared to invest time and effort in the reality testing phase. Many feel that the time, thoroughness and emotional expenditure they have contributed to arriving at this stage of the career transition journey are sufficient. They want to get on with their worklife without further delay in the newly-chosen career action. The lack of reality testing does not necessarily jeopardise a satisfactory career transition outcome. It is just another step which further reduces the risks to those worth taking.

A high proportion of people who are in temporary employment are in fact searching for or evaluating 'permanent' full-time employment. People who undertake temporary assignments not only acquire useful data about a proposed career path and the nature of employment environments but also quickly become familiar with the 'hidden job market'. As a temporary, it is likely that a person will learn of the impending or actual vacancies which are not being or will not be advertised through recruitment advertisements or recruitment agencies. Real-world experiences while temping are useful for evaluating whether they match up with expectations and privately documented career action goals.

> *Being in my thirties, a single woman, on the dole and a stranger to my own country isn't a good basis for restarting a career.*

Career transition loneliness: When working hard to progress a career people often feel the need to talk to someone about their feelings and behaviour. In most cases they would feel inhibited talking to the boss because of a natural reluctance to share too much of themselves with

a person who represents the power to advance or suppress their career ambitions.

Equally, while busy solving a series of problems or carrying out the responsibilities of a challenging position, it is difficult for people to observe themselves and evaluate their degree of readiness objectively. What they might feel is correct behaviour for their career action may not be compatible with the views or expectations of the employer.

A Mentor Helps:

- Assess reality of career action plan
- Make use of networks and information resources
- Initiate appropriate career transition actions
- Recognise abilities and limitations

Need for a coach or mentor: A good coach is essential in improving personal readiness for a significant career action. I have often seen people act hastily for emotional reasons rather than after a calm structured evaluation of the most appropriate action to take. Another person can prevent impulse overruling logic and, in the process, they provide a useful service as coach or mentor. Concurrently, a wise choice of coach or mentor can assist with advice on relevant political behaviour associated with the proposed career action as well as intellectual and emotional support.

My Significant Other can't understand me not getting satisfaction from work or not knowing what would give me career satisfaction.

Pressure from others: A caution needs to be conveyed about the manner of communicating with friends, acquaintances, family members and a partner such as a significant other. When we discuss personal data we may try to be to these people what we have come to know that they expect. Consequently, we may distort information about ourselves for the sake of the relationship and the role we play within it with the other person. Once alert to this danger, the degree of risk can be reduced. One procedure is to share some of the recordings made during the process of career analysis and personal data assembly, but

retain your tentative conclusions. Then you can compare your private notes with the feedback you receive from the other person and note any differences. You may want to think about those differences and decide on communicating about them with the other person.

> *I went to numerous employment agencies with my revamped résumé and no one wanted to know me. It was a degrading experience.*

Underestimating job-seeking complexity: If you have experienced three or more job searches during your career, the complexity of the process will be of no surprise to you. The problem of how to design your résumé, the failure of employers' representatives to return your calls, the fluctuating emotions such as anxiety and stress, of selection interviews and awaiting the verdict on your job applications. Many job seekers maintain the fantasy too long that the right employer will discover them, make an employment offer and hence these tribulations will be avoided: No personal effort to find a job is required. No expenditure preparing and mailing 20 or more job applications a week. No experiencing the loneliness of the job search. The reality is, of course, very different.

This reality also demands an understanding about what counts in securing re-employment. Getting a job offer is different from carrying out a particular job well. They are different situations and consequently demand different skills.

The skills required in job searching concern how the various job-seeking strategies are applied, how to present oneself at interview and the character-testing attribute of persistence. Realistic expectations, the maintenance of enthusiasm and a confident projection of self to others are essential. The inner person may feel depressed, handle rejections badly and have moments of self-doubt while these external characteristics need to be maintained. Concurrently, new skills usually need to be learnt and developed. Résumé writing, cover letter writing, conversational methods, appropriate assertion and how to negotiate are critical to a successful outcome, when a career transition involves job seeking.

If job searching for an alternative employer is part of your career action resolution then there is a need to pause and study the art of job seeking, refine and rehearse the relevant skills before proceeding. I have written two books to assist—*Win That Job!* (5th Edition, 1989) and *Your Job Search Organiser* (1988). From the extensive range of alternative texts I recommend two in particular which have been helpful

to my clients and contain advice relevant to job seeking in Australasia. They are *The Complete Job-Search Handbook* by Howard Figler (Holt, Rinehart and Winston 1979) and *Sweaty Palms: The Neglected Art of Being Interviewed* by H. Anthony Medley (Ten Speed Press 1984).

Much can be learned about an organisation before applying or accepting an employment offer. In August 1989 Egon Zehnder International published their findings of a survey among senior staff employed in the Public Sector within Australia and New Zealand who had completed a career transition from the Private Sector. They reported that many were not given detailed briefings about their jobs before being hired, did not know the specific criteria on which they were being selected and experienced delays in the recruitment process of up to three months. Added to the respondents' feelings about political interference, their work colleagues' obsession with procedure, prevailing attitudes and resistance to change, most were not finding satisfaction in their work. All of these factors could have been researched beforehand. They are experiencing lack of work satisfaction because of a lack in their career transition activities and personal controls when job seeking. It was within their power to avoid these results!

Criteria for promotion: Whether people are in their early twenties or older, it is a rare employment environment that will advance their individual cause without attempts on their own behalf to discover the criteria for promotion. They should look for problems in the organisation to which they might contribute solutions; identify and cultivate the most useful people in senior positions; seek their counsel.

To manage a career well, they must initiate action about their fate as an employee—not simply react to what others decide or choose for them. They must find time to probe diplomatically the 'unpublished rules and expectations' of the employer. They may have to conform in hair length, dress, speech and action, but their thoughts should be developing steadily towards that key moment when they can break out of the ruck and score for themselves in their own individual way.

Many fail to achieve promotion not because of their lack of suitability but due to other influences. Reorganisation, ostensibly for improved efficiency and restructuring of positions, can be influenced more by people who know each other from shared experiences in other employment or non-work activities, with the result that those appointed can lack expertise in the job skill and knowledge requirements. This fact of worklife is known as 'cronyism'. It is not an addition to the vocabulary of employment. It has existed since the

early kings, queens, archbishops and tribal leaders of times long past. The consequence for those who are unsuccessful can be disillusionment and lowered morale. Promotions are achieved by personal campaigns . . . not by producing good performance alone and waiting to be noticed.

Ambition and desire for promotion are encouraged—and even insisted upon—by most employers. And in many cases promotion to a higher level of job tasks can bring a renewed sense of career satisfaction. But promotion does need to be earned. Employers don't exist for our benefit. To achieve higher rewards in the form of challenge and remuneration, you must make yourself more valuable to your employer.

Many consider that the termination of an upward movement within the firm's hierarchy of positions, for whatever reason, is a sign of career failure. But this emphasis on progression through promotion is not shared by every employee. Many question the quality and real value of more senior responsibilities. The higher pay appears to many inadequate compensation for the apparent need to compromise value systems and surrender personal integrity.

Promotion may also result in a realisation that you have overstepped your capabilities, and in this way can be an important indicator of the wisdom of the career choice.

> *I would not prosper in a large organisation with a rigid and immutable bureaucratic structure, if only because I would tread on too many powerful toes in the first twenty minutes of employment.*

Surviving worklife politics: Whenever people gather together it is inevitable that politics are created. No more so is this in evidence than within employment environments. Unfortunately, many people are either insensitive to the political behaviour of their colleagues or seek ways to avoid participating, often at a cost to their careers. Implementing career transitions with one's current employer necessitates an understanding and appreciation of office politics within the current employer's environment.

Politics at work is about power and interpersonal relationships. Where two or more people focus on problems in order to make and implement decisions coalitions are formed. Rarely do these coalitions remain stable. Yet the nature of almost all work activity, except perhaps lighthouse keeping and dingo fence mending, demands that each person interact with others. The social forces that are involved when people communicate lie at the kernel of worklife politics.

The alert, career-conscious person acknowledges this fact and sets out to study the nature of interpersonal relationships. By acquiring an understanding of why people behave the way they do, they are more able to adjust their behaviour in order to influence events to favour, rather than disadvantage, their career. People who have not given some attention to increasing their skills in interpersonal relations have considerable difficulty in improving their worklife situation.

Hard work and a virtuous image alone will not advance a career. Participation in the political behaviour at work is both risky and necessary, unless you have chosen to plateau your career. It is not safe to pretend to ignore office politics.

SIXTEEN TIPS FOR HANDLING YOUR CAREER EFFECTIVELY

1 **PERFORM** efficiently those job tasks which will help your boss the most.

2 **FIND OUT** what your boss regards as good performance in your job. It may differ from your current opinion.

3 **MASTER** your job as quickly as possible and pass your knowledge to another person. In this way, lack of a suitable replacement will not stop your promotional chances.

4 **LEARN** to like yourself as a precious, unique human being. There is no need for you to wait in the wings. You need to move yourself into the spotlight so others can see, respect and take notice of you.

5 **STEP OUTSIDE** the confines of your job description; make sure your actions are regarded as constructive initiative—not just attention seeking.

6 **DON'T** agree to a promotion if it contains activities you don't like. We perform better when doing things we enjoy.

7 **EXPAND** opportunities for those in power to learn more about you by achieving success in outside work activities such as in community service organisations and/or personal development studies.

8 **IDENTIFY** a well-regarded person in a senior position within your employment environment from whom to seek career advancement advice and return the favour by loyalty and respect.

9 **SUGGEST** thoroughly prepared recommendations—not criticisms—for problems within your employment environment.

10 **DEVELOP** your skills at interpersonal relationships; accept the fact that office politics exist; re-examine your personal values regularly so that when faced with ethical dilemmas at work you will know what to do without procrastination.

11 **RECOGNISE** that ability alone will not advance your career—persistence, hard work and being seen as personally ambitious, but an effective team-worker, will.

12 **SMILE** a lot. Others notice and favour people with happy but conscientious dispositions. The despondent people are often regarded as too risky to move to new positions.

13 **ENSURE** you have a good variety of interests outside your worklife career to prevent the stress of your efforts bringing you harm.

14 **PRACTISE** self-nomination. Don't wait to be offered promotion or transfer. Let it be known what different position you want and present a case for why you merit it.

15 **PLAN** for more than one career path. Ensure you develop skills/knowledge for different types of positions. First, because you will then be better placed to take advantage of opportunities. Second, as a protection against falling behind in your knowledge and skills development.

16 **CHANGE** employers only after deep thought and thorough research. Accept a new position not just for more pay but primarily for opportunities for new knowledge in your field.

Career plateau: If your career has reached a plateau, pause to consider why. Is it because of factors outside your control, such as no visible opportunities for progress with your current employer? Is it because the skills for managing your own career require attention in order to compete effectively with your colleagues or external applicants, or

is it because you don't really want to progress further with your current employer?

Self-honesty can be the hardest thing to achieve in the whole subject of career management. Most preach that to stop being ambitious—to plateau a career voluntarily—is a negative decision. But, how many marriages and parent and child relationships would be improved, and psychosomatic illnesses and psychological problems would not recur, if there were more self-honesty and courage about this issue!

Being honest with oneself may lead to the decision to make a career change. It may lead to a decision to stay in the current occupation, but to change employers. It may lead to the need to learn how to manage a career plateau in order to survive within the current employment environment without the disapproval of others in powerful positions.

There is no reason why we cannot remain effective and capable of performing our job tasks while not seeking further promotion. It does not mean ceasing personal growth or the effort to develop job skills. It does mean skilfully informing the boss of this change in attitude without conveying a lowering of enthusiasm or energy towards achieving the employer's objectives. But, the first issue is the decision we make about ourselves. The second is the strategy to inform others without threat to the employment status.

Checking progress

In the process of implementing a career action progress may be less than satisfactory or incomplete. A thorough check should be made in order to audit the degree of readiness to proceed with the career action. Has adequate exploration of self and one's current employment environment been undertaken? What amount of information about alternatives has been acquired? What is the degree of satisfaction with the depth of this information gathering? How detailed is the focus on what is wanted and how is it to be achieved? What is the career path/employment outlook for the proposed career action? What is the state of your necessary transition skills for the journey to its accomplishment?

It is worthwhile pausing to audit whether sufficient study and practice in transition skills has been carried out. The questionnaires which follow help to carry out this audit and identify what skills may require improvement, thereby removing them as an obstacle towards the goal.

Journey's end

I have described how you can conduct an objective, rational and systematic assessment of yourself and your career. I have shown how this information can be used to develop a number of personal themes and lead to writing statements that incorporate the key factors to be considered in deciding your next career actions. This increase in self-knowledge can then be used to guide your search for information about job content, occupation and organisational possibilities. Through this search career action alternatives can be selected which fit your personal themes, goals and schedule.

This career transition journey is therefore a process of discovery. Because we change and so do our employment environments, this journey is not completed until we cease working. Yet we can take up the methods of personal review at any stage to ask ourselves: What do I want? What do they want? (The significant other, family, employer, boss.) What can, should and will I do?

New insights will be acquired each time we pause on the journey to undertake this review. When we initiate this review, rather than wait until a career setback thrusts itself upon us, we learn how to proceed more effectively—how to feel more in control of the nature of our journey.

Too many wistfully scan the recruitment advertisements wishing that the 'job fairy' will somehow magically transport them to more satisfying work. Too many are not prepared to put in the personal effort to undertake this review and help themselves.

It is for these reasons that I am immensely proud of my career transition 'graduates' who followed the procedures I have described. People who elected not to be a victim of pinball living but set out to enact change in their lives.

They:

- identified what was really important to their worklife;
- discovered their real strengths/resources;
- used ingenuity to find opportunities;
- committed wholeheartedly to their career action steps;
- attuned their aspirations to reality;
- believed in their ability to improve their feelings about work.

I usually avoid providing an occupational title when a stranger asks me what I do. I prefer saying, "I help people arrive at a state where

they say 'I like myself'." I have learned that when a person arrives at this point of self-tolerance through my career transition guidelines, and the structured self-assessment and personal goal-setting procedures, all meaningful career transition actions take off.

AUDITING YOUR CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Circle the number you consider applies to you

Scale:

1 - strongly agree
2 - agree
3 - maybe, not certain
4 - disagree
5 - strongly disagree

1. I can list the most important **personal** factors that will affect my career over the next 3 years	1 2 3 4 5
2. I can list at least four critical organisational factors that will influence my career progress with my current employer	1 2 3 4 5
3. I know at least two realistic potential career paths for me with my current employer	1 2 3 4 5
4. I know which responsibilities are mine and which are my employer's concerning the management of my career	1 2 3 4 5
5. I have researched and committed to the necessary training courses/development experiences to prepare for my next career move	1 2 3 4 5
6. I know the right questions to ask when investigating possible new position opportunities	1 2 3 4 5
7. I know accurately where I am in the four stages of career: 1) exploration and trial, 2) career advancement, 3) career maintenance, 4) career decline	1 2 3 4 5
8. I have recorded an unambiguous career goal and schedule for achieving each stage towards it	1 2 3 4 5

9. I am clear on the essential requirements and the desirable features in my next career move	1 2 3 4 5
10. I know the reasons for my past career move choices	1 2 3 4 5
11. I have sorted out my key strengths and accomplishments in terms of my career to date	1 2 3 4 5
12. I know how to measure the value of a job to my overall career before taking it	1 2 3 4 5
13. I am aware of how the 'informal power structure' functions with my current employer	1 2 3 4 5
14. I know where to obtain an unbiased review of my personal development needs, career plans, and proposed actions	1 2 3 4 5
15. I am confident of the depth of my personal skills to hold my own against competition	1 2 3 4 5
16. I have identified, and regularly use, a stress management technique which suits me	1 2 3 4 5

Add the numbers you circled for your total score. If your total score is more than 35, you urgently need to find out more before taking your career further.

TESTING YOUR CAREER TRANSITION SKILLS

Circle the number you consider applies to you

Scale:

1 = strongly agree
2 = agree
3 = maybe, not certain
4 = disagree
5 = strongly disagree

1. I know what skills I can offer employers	1 2 3 4 5
2. I know what skills employers most seek in my target occupation	1 2 3 4 5
3. I can convincingly explain to interviewers what I did well for my last employer	1 2 3 4 5

4. I can specify three good reasons why an employer should hire me	1 2 3 4 5
5. I can secure support of family and friends for making this job change	1 2 3 4 5
6. I can allocate 10 to 15 hours of time each week to conduct a job search if need be	1 2 3 4 5
7. I have the financial resources to sustain a three-month job search if need be	1 2 3 4 5
8. I know how to research different recruitment agencies, employers and organisations in a public library, career reference centre or elsewhere	1 2 3 4 5
9. I can write different types of effective résumés, job search letters, and follow-up letters	1 2 3 4 5
10. I can distribute résumés and application letters to the **most relevant** 12 recruitment agencies	1 2 3 4 5
11. I can list my major accomplishments in ways in which the results are clear and quantifiable	1 2 3 4 5
12. I can identify no less than 12 employers with whom I want to obtain interviews	1 2 3 4 5
13. I can develop a job vacancy referral network to help me	1 2 3 4 5
14. I know how to prospect for job leads where none is advertised	1 2 3 4 5
15. I can use the telephone to 'cold call' and get interviews	1 2 3 4 5
16. I can plan and implement an effective direct-mail job search of unsolicited enquiries to at least 40 firms	1 2 3 4 5
17. I have identified, and regularly use, a stress management technique which suits me	1 2 3 4 5
18. I can create a position for myself in an organisation when none is advertised	1 2 3 4 5

Add the numbers you circled for a total score. If your score is more than 35 points, you need to work more on developing your career transition skills. If you scored 25 points or less, you don't need more preparation or rehearsal. Proceed to implement your career action plan.

CHECKLIST AT POINT OF COMMITMENT TO CAREER TRANSITION

	✓ Yes	No
• Have I carried out the most thorough self-analysis I have ever done?	☐	☐
• Have I identified the most appropriate career action in view of this self-analysis?	☐	☐
• Have I researched what it really entails, where it is available, and the employers with whom it exists?	☐	☐
• Have I developed and written down a career action strategy and timetable?	☐	☐
• Does it fit into my new total lifestyle plan?	☐	☐
• If retraining is involved do I know where tuition is available; the study pattern most appropriate for my needs; enrolment procedures?	☐	☐
• Have I discussed all of the above with my Significant Other?	☐	☐
• Do I know exactly what my current financial assets and liabilities are?	☐	☐
• Am I willing to take worthwhile risks?	☐	☐
• Have I completed the study of career transition strategies?	☐	☐
• Have I discussed plans with Mentor and my Support Group?	☐	☐

Part Three: Helping Worklife Transitions

Need for help • Employer's involvement • Boss as coach, not as counsellor • Counselling beliefs • Resistance to help • Multiple concerns • Client's agenda • Counsellor's obligations • Counselling in practice • Motivation • Structured analysis • Client decision making • Counselling sequence • The 'homework' approach • Interpreting the homework • Transition timing • Transition training • Supporting the client • From acquaintances and strangers • From the counsellor • Resources for the individual • Careers reference centres • Networks • ASCO • Publications • Careerskills Centre, Perth • Self-help support clubs • Organisation sponsored support • The pleasure of helping

I feel you, as counsellor, gave me the release to:
Go and Do Whatever I want to do
Gain a sense of self-worth, self-understanding
It is OK to be lost and searching
OK to be selfish

Need for help

People clearly need counselling when they are not coping well with a worklife problem and the stress that is usually associated with this. Anything which blocks them from successful living and affects performance at work is a matter where the support and advice of another is needed.

This is most likely to occur at any one of a number of decision crossroads in the worklife journey such as:

- Uncertainty over tertiary course selection. Here, the outcomes in terms of real benefits to an individual's personal needs and career goals must be evaluated. The career implications of completing the course successfully require examination. Informed advice is needed before committing to an extensive program of study.

- Inability to make a decision about career path options; where a person lacks confidence about personal potential, is uncertain about real or imaginary blocks and barriers to implementing ideas, or there is conflict within family or other significant relationships over the proposed plans.
- Feelings of being blocked in career development. These could result from the relationship with the boss, from being bored or depressed, or from doubts about qualifications and experience, or the need for more recognition or reward.
- Loss of confidence or fear of rejection. Either can occur when a person needs to make promotion, transfer or job-seeking applications. Counselling can be beneficial and provide useful coping techniques for feelings of increasing uncertainty about the future. Learning how to maintain and even enhance the momentum of a job search and ability to plan may also be relevant.
- Coping with redundancy or unemployment. Coming to terms with the situation, identifying ways to cope, and finding the personal resources to re-establish a career in a more fruitful environment. Consideration of career change may also be beneficial in such situations.

These are the kinds of problems those engaged in career counselling regularly encounter. Such a service can help the person put their situation in perspective, and establish what changes can and should be considered. By helping people understand themselves better, counselling can enable them to identify the most appropriate career strategy. Systematic self-analysis and consideration of the possible alternatives can allow them to reach better decisions. Above all, counselling provides a facility for uninhibited conversation, unbiased advice and companionship during the career transition.

In counselling support for those contemplating starting, or those traversing, career transitions there are Careers Advisers and Worklife Counsellors. Both are concerned with helping a person resolve confusion about the different options faced in their worklife.

A Careers Adviser generally focuses on the 'nine to five' existence and is concerned with matching aptitudes, skills and interests to specific occupations and types of employment environments. The approach taken by a Worklife Counsellor is broader. Here, the counsellor is concerned that career actions are evaluated in terms of the client's perspective on life as a whole. Focus is not restricted to the client's

role as an employee. The relationships between career goals and lifestyle plans are included in the evaluation.

Both must have a substantial experience of the world of work, up-to-date knowledge of education facilities and entry requirements and an ability to empathise with strangers and their problems. And both have a common theme to their work—that another person listening in a certain way can bring a new awareness to the problems being shared by the client, and of the client's strengths and skills to resolve them.

I learnt from my counsellor to acquire knowledge that reinforces my strengths. Not to spend mental and physical energy on becoming more proficient in my weak areas or on where I have low motivation.

Employer's involvement

When an employee shows signs of not coping well with a worklife problem or stress, counselling is indicated. Some will say to leave well alone unless the employee's job performance is significantly affected. I believe that when problems are recognised early an effort should be made to approach the employee and offer assistance.

Career counselling is the process of helping another person deal more effectively with the problems of living and working. Every person who is responsible for the productivity, performance and welfare of another employee is involved in either effective or damaging counselling. This way of looking at counselling emphasises that every person in authority in an employment setting should have the ability to listen and talk to subordinates in a respectful, humane and caring manner; and should recognise the necessity of doing so. Anything less than sensitivity to the problems of subordinates can create resentment towards management. This resentment, while often not revealed directly by subordinates, may find expression in more hidden forms such as grievance disputes, low productivity, absenteeism and staff turnover.

The role of counselling in the context of career management therefore is to deal with any personal and/or interpersonal problem which is causing difficulty for the employee and reflecting in job performance and/or relationships on the job.

Counselling is a complex process and those engaged in it can never cease to learn. There are many texts available for those intent on learning more through the experiences of others. Published in 1989 by

DESIRABLE STUDY SEQUENCE FOR THOSE ENGAGED IN CAREER COUNSELLING

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR/DATE*
Overview of Individual and Organisational Career Issues	Key concepts with equal attention to both individual and organisational issues and perspectives	Wanous (1980) Jelinek (1979) Morgan (1980) London (1984)
Self-Assessment, Objective Setting and Individual Career Planning	Concepts and techniques for self- assessment. Use of experiential exercises for self-assessment and goal setting	Kotter et al. 1978) Storey (1976) Bolles (1984) Stevens (1987)
Individual/Organisational Fit; Career and Lifestyle Choices	Concepts and techniques for analysis of organisations and positions. Examines career possibilities from several perspectives including advancement potential, life-style, and family needs/expectations	Kotter et al. (1978) Storey (1976) Bolles (1984)
The Joining-Up Process and Socialisation	Discusses organisational entry, job expectations, preferred job attributes, career issues for young managers, and early job experiences. Some attention to organisational socialisation practices	Wanous (1980) Schein (1978) Morgan (1980) Jelinek (1979) Hall (1976)
Job Seeking Strategies	Discusses vacancy identification, résumé formats, researching, interview strategies and employment offer negotiations.	Stevens (1987) Bolles (1989) Figler (1986)
Career and Life Stages	The career/life issues and concerns during early, mid, and late career stages. Focus is more on the individual than	Hall (1976) Schein (1978)

Career and Life Stages *(continued)*	the organisational context	Morgan (1980) Jelinek (1979) Sheehy (1983)
Career Issues for Minorities, Women, and Dual-Career Couples	Discrimination and unfair treatment of minorities and women. Special career development activities to compensate for their unique issues	Hall & Hall (1979) Morgan (1980) Jelinek (1979) Hall (1976) London (1984)
Human Resource Planning and Career Planning Practices	Concepts of human resource planning from the organisation's perspective. Individual and organisational responsibilities or career planning programs	Burack & Mathys (1979) Walker (1980) Kaye (1982) Stevens (1988)
Training and Development Programs	Information on organisational training and development activities. Different development activities for individuals in different career situations and as a function of organisational needs	London (1984) Kaye (1982) Stevens (1988)
Organisational Promotion and Transfer Decisions	How organisations make decisions about their employees	Kanter (1977) Storey (1976) Derr (1987)
Staffing Support Systems	Human resource systems used to facilitate career management. Covers such topics as succession planning, promotion lists, job posting, role models, sponsors and mentors	Kanter (1977) Storey (1976) Walker (1980) London (1984) Kaye (1982)

*** Date: Year in which most useful text was published.**

Information Australia, Melbourne, *The Motivation Book* by Garry W. Morton contains practical help in this important human resource management activity. Another useful reference is *Counselling Adults in Transitions: Linking Practice with Theory* (1984) by Dr Nancy K. Schlossberg.

Is this counselling undertaken in order to maintain or increase productivity or is it for the individual's sake? Confusion over this basic question often exists. If we recognise the growing role of every employee in the well-being of an organisation the question answers itself. An employer needs to have concern for the staff's personal welfare as well as for productivity. The growth of more democratic work organisation structures and concern for employees are all part of the human resources development movement, and is good business practice.

If the counsellor is sufficiently skilled and the person is motivated for help, the following can be shared in the counselling process:

The employee has an opportunity to relate to another person the successes and failures, strengths and weaknesses, problems, fears, anxieties, and anything which blocks the person from successful career management and performance at work.

An important factor to bear in mind is that resistance to facing an issue or problem often arises when the employee is approached in a judgemental, blaming or accusing manner. The approach should be one of understanding. Most people do not deliberately mess up their job or lives. Such behaviour often has reasons behind it which are sometimes unconscious. Counselling goes nowhere when done in a blaming mood. The approach, therefore, has to be made in a manner which shows understanding that there is usually much emotional pain and hurt in the person who is experiencing job-related problems.

Effective counselling sets goals. Counsellor and employee must resolve the issue by arriving at some reachable and reasonable goals. These must be specific and time-scheduled.

The employer gains as well as the employee when a successful outcome is achieved as a result of accepting that counselling is a necessary part of employing people.

Boss as coach, not as counsellor

Over 30 years, I have observed and, in many cases, participated in endeavours to extend the responsibilities of managers who supervise others. I have concluded that this trend to equip all managers to be

skilled in human relationships, behaviour modification and, concurrently, able to maintain their expertise in the technical aspects of their job is impractical. The expectation that all managers can be trained to be effective 'personnel managers' is not well-founded in reality. Yet considerable expenditure continues to be made on forms of tuition for managers in an endeavour to achieve this multi-faceted, multi-skilled role.

The manager unquestionably influences the employee's job assignments and the rewards they receive. The manager-employee relationship is crucial in the motivation, attitudes and career outlook of the subordinate. The latter learns from their manager how to do things and how not to do things, and what behaviours result in positive or negative outcomes. The manager is probably the most important source of feedback and reinforcement.

The way a manager manages is essentially judgemental, directive and task/problem focussed. These elements are the opposite of those required for counselling when the purpose of the counselling is to motivate the employee to self-help, facilitate exploration and discovery and remain non-judgemental. Counselling is person-focussed. A manager should be expected to coach employees, not counsel them. There are common skills in both processes—the ability to listen, be empathetic, be warm and genuine. They are nevertheless different processes. Fulfilling a counselling role demands an understanding of personality and behaviour, and how they affect relationships; to understand how the employee has come to be what they are; how best to react to each individual and the complex issues involved in worklife and career planning. This all demands considerable study, time and experience. To expect managers to be able to accomplish this is unrealistic. Referral of subordinates to appropriate counselling resources is the more practical, realistic and potentially fruitful action a manager should take.

The following are the clues to prompt a decision by a manager to refer the employee to a counselling resource either within the organisation or external to it:

- When the manager finds one is dealing with personal or domestic problems rather than work competence difficulties;
- There is a desire for the employee to develop problem-solving abilities of one's own;
- There are special difficulties in handling 'blocks'; that is, when the employee cannot verbalise the problem;

- The manager is apprehensive about how to deal with the emotional pain the discussion may uncover;
- There are longer-term disadvantages of overly-dependent employees.

While there is often a perception of far more risk involved in allowing employees to resolve problems of this nature in the company of a person other than their manager it is a better way of fulfilling the 'contract' implied in the manager-subordinate relationship. It is less risky than incurring the inherent risks of inappropriate outcomes, for which the manager may be measured and held accountable. Considered referral to a counselling resource is not an abdication of responsibility. It is a sensible way to carry out the responsibility of managing others.

Counselling beliefs

Counselling is most effective when the counsellor, whether a fellow employee or in private practice, helps the client to identify self-help measures and procedures so that the person is able to solve their own problems and plan their own quest for information, rather than have the answers dictated to them.

There are several beliefs influencing the way in which counsellors focus on worklife problem solving and the success of such counselling. They are:

- It is important for people to plan their own futures;
- Learning the skills of career planning and self-assessment is an integral part of total personal development;
- Self-knowledge is critical for successful decision making;
- People need to have an accurate knowledge of career paths and jobs suitable for their unique characteristics, and to keep this knowledge up-to-date in a constantly changing employment environment.

The objective of the client-counsellor relationship is to enable the former to change in some beneficial way. The relationship is an informal one—a manner of befriending—and available promptly when the counsellor is needed throughout the career transition journey. The counsellor within this informal framework must stay in charge of the process, control the duration of consultations and maintain a non-directive approach. Both client and counsellor retain the right to terminate the relationship at any stage.

Resistance to help: There are good reasons to deal with worklife problems earlier rather than later. However, many people are reluctant to admit that they are coping poorly. The myth that we can solve all our own problems alone helps to create a denial process within us. Yet, if the difficulties are not resolved, this could be reflected in declining job performance and relationships with work colleagues whose cooperation is essential.

Many people do tend to find ways to 'self-destruct'. There are reasons for this behaviour, but they are sometimes not aware of them. So people need to be sensitive to signs, both verbal and non-verbal, from their associates that they can see something is bothering them. It is important to recognise that there is a need for counselling when this occurs.

Many do not believe in their ability to bring about positive change in their worklife. They do not believe because they have not yet learnt the method and strategies by which this may be achieved, or they place their conviction in anticipating the 'job fairy' will materialise at some stage to put things right. Sometimes it is necessary for the 'job fairy' to arrive in an unwelcomed manner. Frequently this is in the form of a career setback which can stimulate the individual to initiate some 'self-help' action. Both sets of attitudes require different forms of client support.

A client who feels a rigidly structured approach is being taken by the counsellor will resist counselling. The client is unlikely to develop the necessary trust required as a prelude to sharing personal information or taking actions viewed as hazardous to career safety.

All my concerns seem to be closely linked and dependent on one another. Achieving some of my objectives automatically means I will achieve the rest!

Multiple concerns: Those who seek, or are offered, counselling have not one but a range of multiple concerns. While the primary concern may be re-employment, or negotiating with the boss a change at work, or identifying an alternative career, there will be other concerns that have a bearing on the counselling process and outcomes. Clients are likely to have an underlying state of fear, anxiety, guilt, pride, and self-doubt and to be experiencing some degree of difficulty with important relationships both within and outside the current employment environment. Humans commonly feel under some obligation to give in to forces they perceive as existing outside of themselves. But really they are within, and therefore under their control. It is easier for a person to declare "I would do such and such, but

because of x or y I am unable to". The behavioural influence a counsellor seeks to bring about is the motivational power of increasing the client's control over their life by means of perseverance and experientation.

To start the process of isolating how many and what are these multiple concerns, it can be useful to commence a consultation by the client completing a diagnostic aid like the one illustrated.

AID TO IDENTIFYING CLIENTS' CONCERNS AND THE COUNSELLING OBJECTIVES

Please help me to help you by indicating the kind of career transition assistance you are seeking by checking the appropriate items below:

Tick (✓)

..... Help with life planning concerns
..... Need for career information
..... Determining appropriate type of employment in relation to training and work experience
..... Determining appropriate type of employment in relation to interests, values, skills and personality
..... Learning more about my skills and capabilities
..... Changing career or job
..... Long-range occupational planning
..... Help in obtaining a part-time job/job-sharing arrangement/freelance consulting
..... Obtaining a job overseas or interstate
..... Job prospects analysis
..... Résumé guidance
Application counselling (Job, Promotion, Transfer)
..... Interview training
..... Decision-making guidance
..... Help with tertiary education course selection
..... Help with mature-age entry application (tertiary education)
..... Choosing a career for the first time
..... Preparing for next performance review with manager
..... Determining legal rights in the current employment situation
..... Small business creation

Client's agenda: Naturally, in any problem solving encounter, a diagnostic activity needs to take place at the initial meeting with the client. The person may articulate the problem in many ways. It may be stated as "I need help with résumé writing", "I am unhappy with the job I do and want to change", "The person with whom I share a home says I am becoming difficult to live with due to my complaints about my job", "I have a performance review and career planning discussion scheduled with my manager and don't know what to say". There are many more ways in which a worklife issue is presented. The counsellor needs to ask questions which probe the total state of the client's awareness of career self-management and their role within it. Clients commonly commence the association with the counsellor with many gaps in their readiness and ability to decide. The first task of the counsellor is to identify the gaps. It is highly likely that the client needs to be taken through other elements in the career transition process before the stated need can be addressed appropriately. However the initial problem is stated, the counsellor needs to work to a model of analysis to determine whether the client needs to be started at the beginning or at a particular stage in the process of being helped.

As a guide to this early diagnostic work, the following is useful for developing questions to establish where to start the assistance to the client:

Step 1: Self-Assessment
Who am I? What is really important to me?

Step 2: Generating Implications
What kind of job content, employment environment, or lifestyle changes are implied by this self-assessment?

Step 3: Seeking Data on Opportunities
Where do I look? With my current employer? External to my current job?

Step 4: Focusing the Career Problem Solution
What will I target to achieve and how?

Step 5: Seeking and Generating Options
How do I make contact with others who can assist me? What other sources of information are relevant and where are they?

Step 6: Assessing Options
How do I evaluate the options? How do I make a decision about my next career action?

Step 7: Managing the Transition
How do I manage the period from deciding and progressing to the achievement of the new goal?

Step 8: Worklife Survival
Having achieved the career action, what more do I need to learn in order to enhance the value to me and reduce the likelihood of career setbacks?

Once this diagnosis is complete the counsellor needs to assess the manner in which the client should be introduced to the activities necessary for a successful outcome to the career transition; where to start, at what stage and how long the journey is likely to take. Rigid adherence to a counselling help procedure is not good human care practice. Adjustment to the individuality of the client is essential and is a developed skill. Each client has a unique pattern of attitudes, strengths and inhibitions as well as deficiencies in career transition skills and information. To remain responsive to how the client is emotionally and be sensitive to changes in this emotional state throughout the counselling period is the special challenge of this nature of work. Skill with this need for flexibility while conforming to a structured approach and formula ensures career counselling is not "just listening to other people's troubles all day long." It is not like being in the clients' bedroom unsighted and fully clothed as one commented to me in a counsellor-training situation I was leading some time ago!

In many career dilemma situations time is a critical factor. Sometimes the income of the client has ceased, or will shortly. Time may be needed for special training or to meet the schedules of others. The counsellor needs to establish the timetable for resolution, the degree of urgency, before detailing the method and sequence for resolving the issues shared and diagnosed. Where there is critical urgency, it may be necessary to assist in solving a particular issue in which the solution would bring about the quicker reduction of distress, or where a successful outcome can be achieved relatively easily.

As you are unlikely to meet with a client unless they are unhappy about something, the person will evidence some degree of low morale and stress. Consequently, it is useful to introduce the client to an element of fun and curiosity in the process of resolving their issues. As self-assessment is the first and major task, describing this procedure as comparable with detective activity is useful. The inductive element of analysis, sorting through expanses of information recorded about self, looking for clues to themes and linking the themes to specific

career development actions, observing how one item of data logically connects with another, testing the conclusions—all comprise an activity of discovery, challenge and excitement.

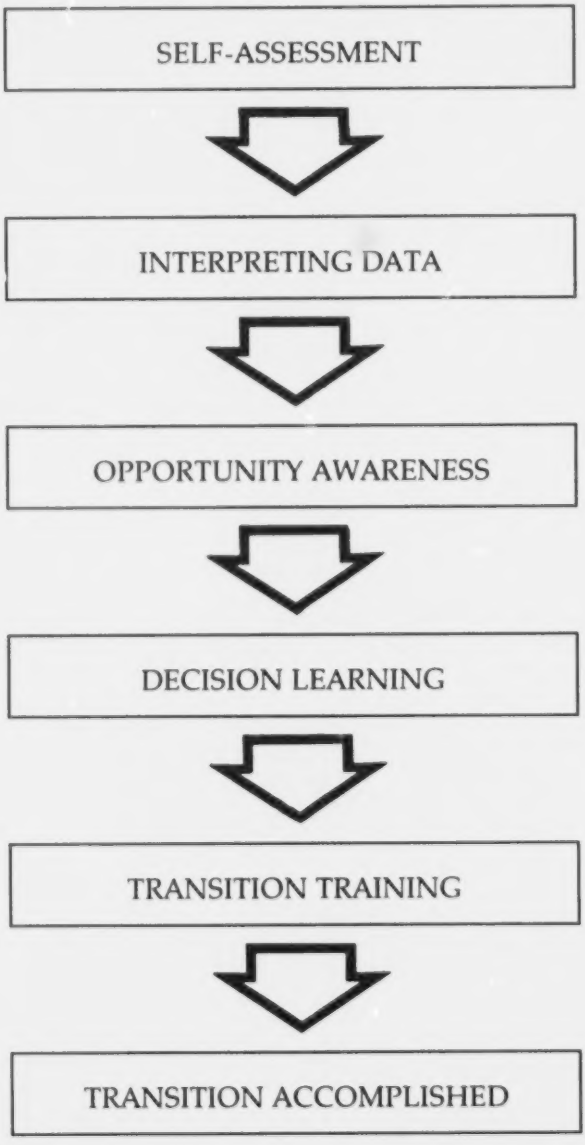
Counsellor's obligations: Engaging in career counselling imposes many obligations upon the counsellor. If the counsellor finds these untenable then he or she should change occupation. One of these obligations is the confidentiality of the information shared by the client. This will be tested many times. It may be tested by telephone calls from the significant other in a client's life; by requests from concerned relatives; by the manager in charge of the Human Resource function of which you may be a member; by the manager of the person involved; by approaches from employers who are funding the consultations if you are in private practice. It will be tested by the way in which a counsellor relates anecdotes about how past clients accomplished their career transitions, even though the motivation may be honourable as a method of imparting confidence to the current client.

I have a rigid regulation governing my work which is not shared by all counsellors, and that is no written report will be compiled or communicated unless the client is given the right to place an embargo on the contents. This causes several organisations not to engage my services.

In private practice all this is relatively easier to accomplish. When the counsellor is an employee of the same organisation as the client the situation is more complicated. Yet, few of us would question that, for a chance of successful outcomes to be possible, clients must feel free and be able to express many thoughts, to tell of their judgements and values, to expose their fears and frustrations, to admit their failures and embarrassments, to boast comfortably about their achievements. Before they can be assisted to learn and to understand what it is they really are or can become, this must take place. They must have confidence that the counsellor will keep confidences confidential.

Since career problem solving requires a commitment of time and energy by both client and counsellor, it is important to clarify the relationship at its beginning. Ascertaining the client's expectations is followed by explaining what the counselling relationship can and cannot accomplish and communicating an estimate of the likely duration. Most career-related problem solving will require the client to complete several self-assessment structured analyses, carry out extensive research between consultations and meet regularly with the counsellor to discuss the diagnosis, progress, activities and feelings.

STEVEN'S MODEL FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT



It is important that the counsellor presents this scenario at the first meeting. Unless the client is really serious about seeking resolutions to their concerns and prepared to apply the necessary time and effort, it is better that the counselling relationship is ended.

Counselling in practice

I just needed to make one positive step and then I found the rest followed.

Motivation: We counsellors are, in essence, motivators. But, in the process of our relationship with each client, we set out to accomplish a transference of this motivational power from us to the client, otherwise it will evaporate at the conclusion of each counselling consultation. By conversational skill and diagnostic ability we enable a client to accept that there is freedom to make choices and changes.

No client in my experience is devoid of personal constraints. This originates in a perception of their necessity to comply, to conform in some way, to subvert their real selves. Our job is to assist the person reduce this restricted, confining vision and expand their array bounds of freedom and possibilities. There are many things we cannot do about our journey through life, but they are fewer than most people tend to think. When the boundaries of this freedom have been expanded by skilled counselling then the client can progress to acting in ways that are more the reflection of the real person.

This is more difficult to accomplish when the client is experiencing a career setback. Being fired, made redundant, or losing out at work over some coveted desire can all cause clients to reduce their boundaries of personal freedom and feel that life is a matter of following the lead of others, reacting rather than being pro-active. A 'victim' mentality is frequently evidenced during counselling and a 'powerless' attitude conveyed. Counselling a person experiencing a current career setback is difficult and thereby more challenging.

Each person who seeks out counselling needs to make a commitment. Without a commitment the individual will be defensive, uncooperative and the process will be inadequate and even fruitless. This commitment involves the client taking time to prepare for each consultation, and taking responsibility for what is needed to learn. True feelings and concerns need to be shared by an uninhibited manner. The counsellor needs to establish early in the process that this commitment exists.

OUTLINE OF THE COUNSELLING PROCESS

CLIENT RELATIONSHIP	SECURING RAPPORT/ EMPATHY
EXPLORATION	LISTENING AND QUESTIONING SKILLS
UNDERSTANDING	INTERPRETING ACCURATELY
DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING ACTION	TEAM PROBLEM SOLVING SECURING COMMITMENT TO PLAN
REVIEWING CAREER ACTIONS TAKEN	SUGGESTING RELEVANT NEW LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

Conducting the self-analysis has served to make me aware of my highly developed need to please and to be useful to others. This results in my being extremely conscientious, but I lack the ability to conserve energy.

Structured analysis: The various constructs of questionnaires used in self-assessment can present problems in client management. The person can often feel anxious while responding to these diagnostic aids if they assume that the aids are evaluating them. Previous experiences of taking tests, aptitude tests, examinations and the like can contribute to an impression that there is a right and wrong answer or that their responses will reveal them to be 'bright' or 'unintelligent'. Anxiety can be raised to uncomfortable levels as a consequence and the person may fall into the error of responding with less honesty through these erroneous assumptions of measurement. The counsellor should monitor their client's reactions and set out to reassure that the questionnaires will not and cannot tell the person what to do with their life; or tell how good a person they are. Their purpose is to provide relevant information that can assist in making better career-related decisions. The person remains in charge.

It is only natural for a client to worry about how the counselling process will turn out. Some will see too much which is negative, others

may self-delude into conclusions that are not sufficiently substantiated. Again, the counsellor is the guardian of the process to ensure that it is not misused—not an evaluator of the person. The emotional drain on clients is demanding. The challenge for the counsellor is to assist in maintaining clients' morale as they strive towards a clearer idea of themselves. Yet, once accomplished, seldom have any of my clients not felt proud of their accomplishment and the learning about how to prepare for and execute satisfying career and life management decisions.

I think a lot and analyse things and this ties in with being able to wander around in my work and release myself from the designated 'work only' areas of the office. I seem to prefer fast-paced deadline orientated atmospheres—but I will need to be able to take time out to keep in control.

Client decision making: Those engaged in career counselling for some time know the danger of the impulse to short circuit the process and tell the client what to do. The counsellor's own career experiences, setbacks, achievements, education, and the results of the career transition actions of past clients all contribute to an ever expanding fund of knowledge of what works and what doesn't. Nevertheless, a counsellor's true role is as a facilitator for the client's own decision making. No doubt, a greater degree of skill and awareness of careers is within the counsellor. But the client will be living with the consequences of the decisions required in the career transition. The client has the primary responsibility for generating, evaluating and using the data that affects those decisions. After all, the fundamental process is self-assessment and self-determination.

A counsellor can be helpful in observing how the client has made decisions in the past and comment on this interpretation constructively. Regardless of the background, each client has repetitively been faced with choices regarding what to do, how to do it, and when. Patterns in these choices can indicate the individual's decision-making style. That pattern is not likely to change substantially, but the nature of companionship through the decision-making process can.

Research into how people make decisions has been conducted for many years. This research has considerable bearing on the career transition journey as clients proceed through information gathering, evaluating, creating and implementing plans, choosing and remaining satisfied with their choices. V.A. Harren published findings in 1979 about decision making which supports my observations about my clients' variations in decision-making styles. Consequent to his

research, Harren designed a useful self-report diagnostic questionnaire entitled, Assessment of Career Decision Making (ACDM) to measure them.

Briefly, Harren described three styles: rational, intuitive, and dependent. The rational decision-maker gathers information carefully, evaluates it objectively, decides on the basis of likely negative and positive consequences and is comfortable with self-accountability for the ultimate choice. The intuitive decision-maker has a tendency to decide emotionally and quickly. This is likely to be affected by their current mood. Such a decision-maker tends to curtail the information-gathering phase and consult less with those likely to be affected by

A GUIDE FOR CAREER ACTION DECISION MAKING

Consider the decision you need to make. It is likely to be between two or more career action options, that is, alternatives.

Step 1: For each alternative write down a list of as many outcomes as you can think of—that is, consequences from choosing the alternative. Some will be negative and others positive in nature.

Step 2: Assign to each outcome on the list a number, a value, from -10 to +10. When values approach 0 the outcome is of little, or low, importance in relationship to others on your list. The negative outcomes should be recorded as a minus, that is, -10 to -1

Step 3: For each outcome listed, evaluate the probability that it will happen. For example, 0 is that the outcome will definitely not occur. 10 is that it definitely will occur. 5 indicates a fifty-fifty chance that it will occur. Write these figures in the second column.

Step 4: Multiply the value of each outcome by the probability of occurring. Write these answers in the third column. Add up this column. Repeat this procedure for the other alternative(s).

Step 5: The alternative with the highest expected value is a **guide** to the most appropriate option for you to take.

implementing the choice. Understandably, there is resistance to completing homework assignments thoroughly between counselling sessions. The dependent style of decision-maker is heavily subject to the influence of others, both counsellor and others such as significant other, friends, acquaintances and their manager at work. Such a client is likely to try to remain passive when involved in the career counselling process and can present frustrations to the counsellor who is endeavouring to stimulate the person to take both personal action and responsibility for their own career and related actions.

The purpose of worklife counselling is not to change the client's decision-making style radically. Such a quest will produce resistance, even antagonism. However, the counsellor, correctly diagnosing which decision-making style represents the client more than another, needs to explain the inherent values, dangers and consequences. The client is likely to accept a carefully phased explanation along these lines and to modify the approach in order to reduce the illustrated dangers of incomplete data gathering or abdication of personal responsibility.

This variation in clients' decision-making styles has a direct implication for counsellors who use a structured decision-making model and diligently apply each step of the model regardless of the behavioural nature of the client. The outcomes are likely to be less satisfactory for both parties.

Counselling sequence

Each counsellor will develop their own sequence of career transition support counselling. To traverse the entire sequence a client may need from four to twelve consultations. The sequence I have found the most effective for me and for my clients follows:

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Clarifying Issues/Concerns—Transition Purpose—Timetable—Introducing Client's Role—Homework Purpose and Content

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Assemble Information Base through Structured Analysis—Education and Employment Experiences—Abilities—Interests—Values—Primary Wants—Environment Preferences—Lifestyle Considerations—Biographical Review

INTERPRETING DATA

Analysis—Transferable Skills Identification—Career Themes Developed—Seeking Clarification—Resolving Ambiguities—Lifestyle Integration—Monetary Needs Goals—Barriers to Success—Identifying Perceived and Real Constraints

OPPORTUNITY AWARENESS

Guidance for Research and Information Resources—Organisational Environment—Community Information Gathering—Career Action(s) Options Selection—Benefits Appraisal—Reality Testing—Networking—Mentoring

DECISION LEARNING

Evaluating Career Action Options—Trade-offs—Deciding on Goals—Transition Scheduling—Coping Techniques—Conflict Resolution Methods—Support Relationships—Role of Significant Other—Role of Employer

TRANSITION TRAINING

Preparation Programs for Short- and Long-Term Goals—Strategies—Documentation (e.g. Résumé)—Negotiation Skills Training—Interview Training—Job Seeking—Auditing Transition Progress—Stress Coping Methods—Handling Setbacks—Evaluating Offers—Decision and Acceptance

TRANSITION ACCOMPLISHED

Review of Completed Career Action—Personal Needs Audit—New Learning Needs Diagnosed—Personal Adjustment Strategies—Planning Next Career Action

My homework assignment is proving to be the biggest and perhaps the most important task I have ever undertaken. So many questions I have never asked myself and no real way of assessing which are the best answers. Maybe I should have done what my friend did, and take two months off!

The 'homework' approach: The extensive content, time involved, serious nature of the issues, differences in urgency, aspects of relationships with others and the varying degrees of client comfort with self-review, combine to make the counsellor-client face-to-face interview an inadequate forum for all that is required in career transitions. Whether directive or indirective questioning technique is

used, the counsellor will not elicit all the necessary data and in the appropriate form through consultative interviews alone. Assigning homework for the client to undertake between consultations is the procedure I have followed for several years. Not only does it produce the necessary additional data, it helps make it clearer to the client that they have ownership over the process and ultimate decision making. I use the homework statement reproduced here as a means of introducing the concept of homework as the way of helping.

CLIENT'S HOMEWORK

Introductory Statement

In career counselling and worklife planning homework serves several important functions. It helps you to apply the key points gained in our initial consultation meeting. It can prod you to gather new, more thorough data regarding the issues you are seeking to resolve. It can also serve as a form of reality testing for suggested courses of personal action. Just as important, your homework provides a bridge between each of our discussions and emphasises in the process that you are responsible for your own destiny. One of my roles is to assist you to gain control of this.

The homework assignments not only help progress towards resolving your problems, but also help highlight possible obstacles to achieving your goals. This provides me with an opportunity to advise you on how to overcome them.

By working on the selected homework assignments you can move further towards resolving your concerns.

The homework assignments are carefully selected to suit your particular needs and career situation, following my initial diagnostic work and your agreement that there is a clear understanding between us of the worklife issues to be solved defined in specific terms. On your part you should ensure that your understanding of the homework assignments is clear. Do not hesitate to ask "Why is it important for me to complete this?" You have the right to understand my reasons for making suggestions or using particular procedures. I will keep anything that you record in strictest confidence unless I have your permission to tell someone.

> In our busy lives there are numerous distractions which can impede completion of the homework. Please discuss with me any potential problems that may impede not only completion but also the pleasure of moving forward to a greater understanding of self, increased self-confidence and the emergence of a clear course of action.
>
> The homework is both constructive and therapeutic. It considerably enhances your progress towards successful outcomes. It is a means for you to expand your career transition skills so that you shortly become self-reliant and independent of my help.

If the client has come to the consultation for 'potted' answers and to be told what to do, the conscientious career counsellor should comment on the reasons for the homework approach. In the event that the client declines to follow this method, then the client should be directed elsewhere. Career counselling is a teamwork approach with the client, not a 'tell and sell' relationship.

It may be necessary to state to the client the benefits of the homework method of starting the helping process. One or more of the following benefits may suffice to motivate the client. The following benefits can be drawn to the client's attention:

- The value of writing down data will not only be useful to resolve current problems but also serves as a guide to career issues occurring in the future.
- The process causes one to think more clearly and carefully and to make explicit in a way that is useful what is already within you.
- When written information about the self is recorded you can gain some emotional distance and view the data more objectively.
- It facilitates the gaining of views of others whose opinions are respected and/or who are involved in the outcomes.
- The progress towards problem-resolution can be monitored and personal growth and development is easier to detect and feel better about.
- Reading your recordings far surpasses remembering resolutions, conclusions, action steps, and resources.

- The homework substantially increases the inductive skill. The slower procedure of thinking and writing rather than thinking alone provides opportunities to perceive the connections between events, data, changes, setbacks, accomplishments and past and present relationships with people and employers.

Homework allows the client considerable latitude in responding to the questions within the structured analyses. What and how they choose to answer in writing can tell us important information about the client. What is recorded, what is not, and how it is recorded are useful data for the counsellor. As the client progresses with the homework into a more inductive phase of self-assessment there will be revealed how consideration is being given to the relationship between data, assumptions and inference. By noting these, the counsellor can be at their most helpful in their advice to the client.

The homework method of client management also provides the flexibility for taking the career transition at a different pace for each person according to the counsellor's assessment of the degree of motivation, timetable for results and morale state of the client. The homework can be segmented and, in a prescriptive manner, exercises selected and set for accomplishment in the interval between consultations.

I am still working on the homework you have set me. I am not sure why I have delayed. It could be I am delaying facing the issues raised in the questions.

For the first time in my life I had achieved an excellent result in the endeavour of writing up my life and work experiences. I noticed I had succeeded in a number of areas through the sheer assertion of my will, use of skills and belief in the purpose.

Since I've done this career analysis I see that I am my own person. I see that I have had the courage in past career events and now know that I can use the same courage to make anything happen correctly for me from now on.

Interpreting the homework

I now know I am happiest where the borders of traditional work and traditional leisure, play and relaxation blur. For the first time I have really taken time to spend with myself and grapple with learning what actions to take. The days have been filled with exploring and discovering totally new ways and discovering the wonders of self-help.

I really looked hard at my personality—not just what I was good at, but what I enjoyed and handled well, and what I didn't, where my real strengths were and how they fitted in. I didn't follow your more formal way but made notes on scraps of paper during seemingly endless thinking spells and discussions with others.

After doing each homework exercise I found that a few things kept coming to the fore which were similar. It revealed that which I should set out to avoid in my next career action.

Perhaps there is a clue to my future career in my love of betting on horses. Here, the enjoyment of predicting a result without any magic wand—only my mind and imagination. The earning of money without having to conform to conventional work practices or routines. The feeling of being part of something exciting and living it through as it happens.

The clients' completed homework may take the form of responses to direct or indirect questions, one line responses, prose style commentaries, yes and no delineations to questions posed, work history details, psychometric diagnostic aids completed and/or the person's life story in chronological form.

Whether or not clients can interpret their own homework is not dependent on their individual intelligence, motivation or deductive skill. Many will complete the structured self-search assignments and regard their completion as the accomplishment. They should not be cajoled or your further help denied until they have formulated a career action plan. You, the skilled helper, are expected to interpret the data and formulate recommendations. Other clients will proceed seemingly effortlessly into conclusions that appear initially well reasoned and explicit. In all cases the counsellor's role is to monitor the client's progress and read the responses with care, striving in a clinical fashion to complete the diagnosis independently from the client's favoured conclusions. The fact that you may grow to agree with them should be seen as a separate process to evaluating the client's data independently. The counsellor is the checker, the person who seeks to detect self-delusions, unsubstantiated conclusions, incorrect interpretations of events, or inadequate appraisal of talents, skills and competencies. You are the person to look for patterns that might indicate stable interests and preferences, what the client likes and dislikes and the reasons for these attitudes, to bypass superficial statements, to note the underlying anxieties and doubts and to note the progress towards making a commitment towards a career action;

all the time reminding oneself that it is the client who will have to live with the choice and hence he or she must make it, not the counsellor on their behalf.

When the counsellor reviews the concluding career goal and career action plan, a number of checks need to be made such as: the logic of connection by the client between themes apparent in their self-assessment information and the implications, logic of connections between themes, implications and career action proposed, logic of connections between themes, implications and lifestyle plans, degree of detail and specific schedule for implementing the foregoing, assessment of resources (clients' career record documentation, people, printed word, money, etc.) to support the career transition and the realism of perceived constraints to successful outcomes.

When you are checking the client's own conclusions keep the following in mind:

- Stay close to the data. Analyse what is recorded and avoid manufacturing what is not.
- Search for patterns, conclusions, inferences, opinions . . . all must be supported by evidence that they are real, not merely 'casual ideas'.
- Guard against your own bias. It is the uniqueness of the client you are reviewing, not what you think is right for how they live their life.
- Take adequate time. Good analysis requires patience, repeated reading, and thinking periods.

Here is an example of the concluding phase of homework analysis undertaken by a client:

EXAMPLE OF CLIENT'S HOMEWORK ANALYSIS

On looking carefully at the homework I have noted that there are a number of contradictions or paradoxes. I do not pretend to be a psychologist but, on the one hand, I am saying that I want to get into a people-orientated business (even selling) and, on the other hand, some of my notes show that I am not really suited to this, or don't even want it.

Coming back to practicalities, the following would appear to be alternatives:

1. I am by and large limited by my skills or by the time constraint to learn new skills. It would seem to me that the biggest problem could be my employer or present job rather than my occupation. If this is true I can use my existing skills with a different employer. This, in effect, means that I will stay with Finance and Administration but put more emphasis on things I show an enjoyment for, that is: Designing systems—Costing—Budgeting—Liaising with people—Cash flows—Analysing and solving problems.

   It is not exactly what one would call a Systems Analyst, which really requires a computer degree, but more of a Management/Systems Accountant. This would require becoming somewhat more experienced in the likes of Lotus 1-2-3 and dBase IV and packaged accounting systems. My career analysis shows that while I dislike hard selling I do like discussing, interviewing, liaising and consulting.

   The first choice, therefore, is to acquire some new and expand on existing skills in an endeavour to obtain a job that at least fits my basic requirement. While this does involve some departure from my present occupation it is not dramatic and on paper at least is achievable. The only problem is that this option is not immediately available.

2. The second, but less satisfactory, alternative (but more realistic) is to do exactly what I am doing now but with a change of employer and industry. This might work and it might not. If it doesn't, I am back to square one.

3. Yet a third option is to apply for a job in a Trading Company. This is somewhat unrealistic as I have been out of trading for many years now, but it could possibly be combined with option 1 or 2.

4. A fourth (even more unrealistic) option is to look at something completely different that requires limited skill and somewhat lower earnings such as a Real Estate Agent or Superannuation Consultant. An acquaintance of mine who is older than me has started a new career as a postman.

5. Finally, there is the option of self-employment. This could be considered if my son were to join me. This would be the least favourable option because of the financial risk.

Of the above 5 options, option 1 looks to be the best. I believe, however, that my immediate plan must be to:

a) Develop Personal Computer skills as above
b) Prepare a résumé for Administration/Financial Controller
c) Start looking for a job that has most of the attributes I have outlined
d) Start applying for jobs

If I am to change industry, this would be mainly by applications rather than networking, as I have limited contacts in other industries.

Transition timing

It is difficult to separate the realisation of the need and reasons for a decision from the decision itself. The former took me two years, deciding what I'd do as an alternative took only a weekend.

In my early days of counselling I used to worry about those clients who did not return for more teamwork on their career dilemmas. As time passed I noticed that most did, but a considerable period had elapsed between our meetings—in some cases more than a year. I was falling into the trap of assuming all would progress through the career transition journey at a similar pace. It's obvious when one pauses to think, that timing differences should exist naturally, particularly when a client undertakes considerable self-review as part of the preparation for a worklife change. The inner self requires time to pass through the stages of assimilating events, setbacks, achievements, memories and discriminating preferences from the many clues which lie within everybody's worklife experiences. To integrate more of our true self within our worklife and get both working together as a whole takes time—and a different amount of time for different people.

Transition training: The career transition support is not complete until the client has implemented the resolutions made during the Self-Analysis, Opportunity Awareness and Decision Learning phases. Many counsellors terminate their support at the Decision Learning stage. This may be because of their lack of knowledge of career action implementation strategies or job-seeking techniques. This is

understandable. There are, for example, 59 ways to job seek; at least 20 alternative ways to format and design a résumé; within Sydney there are 732 recruitment agencies. In fact, the knowledge required to assist the implementation of a career action plan is considerable. I am fortunate in transferring knowledge of value to the Transition Training phase of career counselling from my former career as a Personnel Manager.

When a person has worked out, researched, and tested the proposed career action the enthusiasm is usually high to proceed to implement it. At this stage it is important to examine a range of alternative strategies for the implementation and the assessment of the personal skills of the person. One strategy may suit a certain level of personal skills better than another.

Transition Training is as much about techniques of implementation as helping the client cope with and manage the change. The logic of the techniques needs to be coupled with an understanding of the emotional aspects of implementation. Transition Training will draw on the counsellor's knowledge of resources, creative and divergent thinking and problem-solving skills. In some situations the counsellor may need to recognise their limitations and arrange a referral to a resource more competent in the particular aspect causing difficulty. To assemble a list and contact information of such resource people is a wise and practical activity. Recognising one's limits as a counsellor in the Transition Training phase is important and sensible so that clients are helped effectively. This also helps the counsellor identify their own training needs so that they can extend their helping process competently and participate in the exciting, concluding phases of the person's career transition journey.

> *I have and still have to accept the pain, the sense of loss and sadness that goes with letting go of the familiar and that career with which I have identified myself for so long.*

Supporting the client

While the counsellor should be a trusted confidant throughout a career transition experience, people need more companionship than is feasible in the counsellor-client relationship. Hence, an early agenda in the process of consultation should be establishing what support clients have. The nature of this support needs to be discussed: its degree of trust, confidentiality, depth and practicality.

A career transition is never accomplished alone. A person requires support from their loved ones, friends and acquaintances, strangers, counsellor and, desirably, the organisation of which they are a member.

The client copes better with their career transition journey and the associated stresses if there is positive support from other people. Their coping is more likely to be adaptive if they perceive that people they know are supportive of their efforts. Support from others can provide a client with:

- a sense of shared involvement, motivation and belief;
- a different perspective and another assessment of the situation;
- a bond of trust and care;
- a reinforcement of purpose and the process of reaching goals.

Implementing a career action needs to take into account whether both positive support exists and the needs of the significant other in the person's life are also being met by the chosen career action. Rarely does a person live in such isolation that their career-related action will not impact on others close to them. It is responsible and proper for the counsellor to raise the issue and, in some cases, provide practical means whereby the significant other can learn about and understand the nature of the counselling assistance. The place where my counselling work takes place when not travelling is a large L-shaped lounge. It was selected on the basis that, on these occasions, a minimum of three could sit comfortably with each other with no physical barrier to the conversation.

> *I believe that I am now at the stage where I need to be guided by some independent appraisal of my capabilities and I find that I am simply unaware of opportunities outside the Law to which I could realistically direct myself effectively.*

From acquaintances and strangers: Beyond the arena of the counsellor-client relationship, individuals will progress better with their career transition if they have access to another person with whom they can share the content of the counselling experiences and discuss the implications arising from each stage. Clients may not have such a person within their own network. Here the counsellor may consider recommending a person with whom such discussions can take place, or provide guidance as to resources within the community from where this form of support may be obtained.

One of the more endearing features of my worklife is the willingness of past clients to volunteer to be such a mentor to 'strangers'. Consequently, I maintain a referral list of people prepared to lend themselves in such a human service manner. We all know the value of impartial counsel when we are grappling with personal decisions. We also know that among those who love us that impartiality is unlikely to be found. Their support for us comes in other forms. Hence, the person who can be 'matched' with a client need not know anything about them other than what is shared. I have found that this procedure is an important feature of career transition support work, and this is not surprising. Our heritage of literature provides many expressions of this form of companionship. My favourite is by George Eliot, the pseudonym for Mary Ann Evans—"Oh the comfort, the inexpressible comfort, of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but to pour them all out, just as it is, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful ally will take and sift them, keeping what is worth keeping, and then, with the breath of kindness, blowing the rest away."

I don't need pressure to proceed; I generate my own. What I do need is positive feedback and intelligent questioning with the implicit sense of being valued this involves.

From the counsellor: The counsellor, whether an employee of the same organisation as the client or external to the person's employment environment, needs to constantly remind themselves that their proper role is as a facilitator to the client. The temptation to tell the client what to do based on your knowledge and experiences is the temptation I have referred to earlier. Yet, it is the latter which the client expects to benefit from. Advice, whether in written or verbal form, should provide a framework for the client deciding on their own action and manner of implementing it. In an endeavour to illustrate this more difficult form of supporting, I am including an example of client support-giving on a subject which many in career transitions seek help about, for example, an interview. What follows uses my knowledge and experience of this subject but does not specify nor dictate what the client should actually say during an interview. It gives them a framework for deciding their own form of behaviour at the same time as increasing their chance of a successful outcome:

Advice about interviews: An interview can be a rewarding event in your career transition. You can leave feeling that you have done yourself

justice, been listened to thoughtfully and been given a thorough description of what the job requires and the nature of the employment environment in which it is to be performed. You can also leave feeling you made a mess of it, or that you were treated discourteously. In between these extremes is a panorama of different feelings.

The common tendency is to be severe critics of our performance at interviews. The inherent danger of this is that when we receive an offer of employment we are inclined to accept it too readily, if only to end the necessity of being interviewed and scrutinised by more strangers with the power to reject us.

Yet interviews are an essential part of most career transitions. It is likely that we will experience them many times during the average working lifetime of forty-four years. There is an art in being interviewed, just as there is in interviewing, which is acquired by examining what is likely to happen and being prepared. You should consider what you have done, could do and hope to do in the future, and ask yourself questions about the areas interviewers are likely to cover when you meet.

Frequently remind yourself that you are appraising whether or not you wish to work there, not just striving to win an employment offer in competition with others.

Preparation: In my experience, job seekers seem surprised by questions that go a little deeper into an otherwise superficial reply. Do not resent these forms of follow up, as the objective is rarely anything sinister, but rather a desire to obtain a fuller picture of how far you match the demands of the job and the environment in which it is to be carried out. So, the guide for you is to give a comprehensive response to questions, not merely an affirmative or negative reply. It is often how you reply rather than the content which makes the difference when candidates are being compared by those accountable for selection decisions.

Another observation in my interviewing experiences over thirty years is the tendency of job seekers to focus too much on the job or jobs they may expect to aspire to and pay too little attention to presenting their case for the challenge of the actual vacancy for which they are being considered. Ambition is a healthy attribute, but selecting a person who is continually distracted by focusing on their next promotion may not produce the output from current job task assignments the employer requires.

So, do prepare your questions and responses about the tasks,

problems to be solved and the environmental conditions of the specific job for which you have applied.

Your personal attitude has a considerable bearing on likely success. Interviews are not trials of strength at witticisms or intellectual game-playing. They are an exchange of data, preferably in a conversational rather than an interrogation mode, whereby both parties are thoughtfully considering each other and aware that frank exchanges of information are essential for a mutually satisfactory outcome.

For the interviewer, the task is to make an objective judgement on the evidence available, and to make sure that job seekers have had an opportunity to show their merits adequately. Also, that they should leave the interview feeling that the experience they have gone through has been worthwhile.

If at all possible, rehearse for an interview by role playing with a friend or counsellor. If your partner is an experienced business person the role playing will be more realistic and help you in simulated form to adjust your behaviour and responses. Another source for preparation is to accept opportunities to be interviewed by anybody who invites you for one—even if you are not interested in the job. These real-life encounters will improve your skills and make you more effective when faced with an interview for a job you really want.

Reasons for rejection: A job seeker can be rejected for a number of reasons. Just some of them include being overly modest about your achievements, talking too little at the interview, knowing little about the employer, and unrealistic expectations of salary and employment benefits. Poor manners, appearance and appearing too confident are others. The best guide is to speak confidently about yourself, use common courtesies and at the same time present yourself as a person eager to learn more and contribute to helping to solve the employer's problems. The last point is the most important. The only reason you will ever be employed is to help solve an employer's problems. Whatever business they are in, the normal working day is a series of problem-solving tasks.

Job descriptions, duty statements and position outlines can usually be obtained before an interview. They contain a list of tasks to be performed. But the astute job seeker uses their mental capabilities to deduce from their contents the nature of problem solving inherent in the vacancy. If this proves too elusive your questions of the interviewer should be directed at eliciting what they are and then

stating your case for believing that you have the competencies and potential for contributing to their solution.

Discrepancies between you and the job: There are usually some discrepancies between what an employer wants and what the applicant offers. In addition, there may be aspects in your background that might have to be accounted for at an interview. Often job specifications are based on the 'ideal' candidate. You can be successful by affirming the assets you have that would compensate for the missing requirements.

Some concerns in the minds of interviewers are not expressed. If you know you have some negatives in your background do not assume that because the interviewer has not asked about them, they are being ignored.

If you sense that something is bothering the interviewer which you cannot identify, it is better to ask directly. This could be along the lines of: 'Is there anything about my application that gives you some concern? If so, I would like to be able to discuss it with you.'

It is far better to get things out in the open than to be rejected for a reason that may not have any validity. The assertive applicant must look for such problems and seek to have them resolved before the interview is concluded.

By careful rehearsal you can prepare some comments which emphasise the good points about your candidature, your enthusiasm for particular subjects and projects undertaken, your ability to overcome setbacks, and your research about the employer.

Dealing with illegal questions: Federal and State laws on equal employment opportunity discourage employers from asking certain questions which might cause discrimination in employment. Most employers are trained to avoid asking such questions on an Application Form or during an interview. Occasionally they will be asked despite these regulations.

Once you are hired by a company it may ask you 'unlawful' questions because this information may be needed for job related purposes, such as providing insurance, pension plans, and so forth.

The questions that interviewers should not ask relate to your marital status, your plans for raising a family, and your ethnic origin. You must always keep in mind that it never pays to lose your temper or become belligerent if a question is asked which offends you. Most of the time it is due to the ignorance of the interviewer rather than any personal prejudice. My recommendation is that you respond calmly

by asking for an explanation as to the relevance of the question to your ability to perform the tasks of the vacancy. In most cases the offending question is likely to be withdrawn and the interviewer will move on to other areas of discussion. If not, then you have a strong indicator that you may not like working for this employer and may decide to withdraw your employment application.

Questions you should not ask: Because you are judged by the type of questions you ask, it is important to avoid those that might make you appear too demanding. Such questions as when might you expect your next salary rise, the political inclinations of the employer, and profit and loss information. Yet, questions about reimbursement of tuition expenses for further study to improve your skills are likely to be interpreted positively. Do not be in a rush to learn about employment benefits such as sick leave, insurances and special leave provisions. You are likely to have these presented when the employer has decided to make you an offer, and at that stage you can assess their value to you.

A RÉSUMÉ IS NOT A CAREER OBITUARY

A lot of résumés LOOK about as thrilling as an obituary! They are dead and boring, and there isn't a shred of evidence that the person is an alive, exciting, enthusiastic, committed human being.

Why IS that? Why do people think this document has to be so DULL??

Maybe it's because they think their WORK was dull? In many cases, of course, their past work WAS dull; but even so, there were always aspects of it that were fulfilling and interesting, perhaps the informal times when they helped out a co-worker or the creative times when they came up with a new way to get a small piece of the job done more efficiently.

As a counsellor, you may have to DIG to get at those illustrations of creativity and aliveness that were there in a client's otherwise uninteresting work history. You can tell you are using the right technique when you see the client 'light up' and get excited in describing what they did on the job. They'll sit up straighter, talk faster, maybe smile, and be surprised at what's coming out. They'll say "Yes, that was really fun and it made me

feel good. BUT, that had nothing to do with my job. I wasn't even supposed to be doing it."

But keep on pushing them and get them to tell you WHAT THEY ENJOYED DOING, WHAT GAVE THEM A SENSE OF SATISFACTION AND ACCOMPLISHMENT, regardless of whether it had anything to do with the job they were hired to do. That way, you'll get at their REAL SKILLS, because it's invariably true that people get a sense of enjoyment and gratification when they're using their highest level of skills.

It's also true that they may not YET have figured out how to get PAID for using their highest level of skills. But, if you have any serious commitment to your profession, it's your business to support them in finding out what their real strengths are as Step One, and NOT to support their belief that work usually has to be a drag. One proof of your success in this would be a résumé that's alive and interesting because it reflects the client's real personality, priorities, and giftedness.

So keep asking your client over and over:

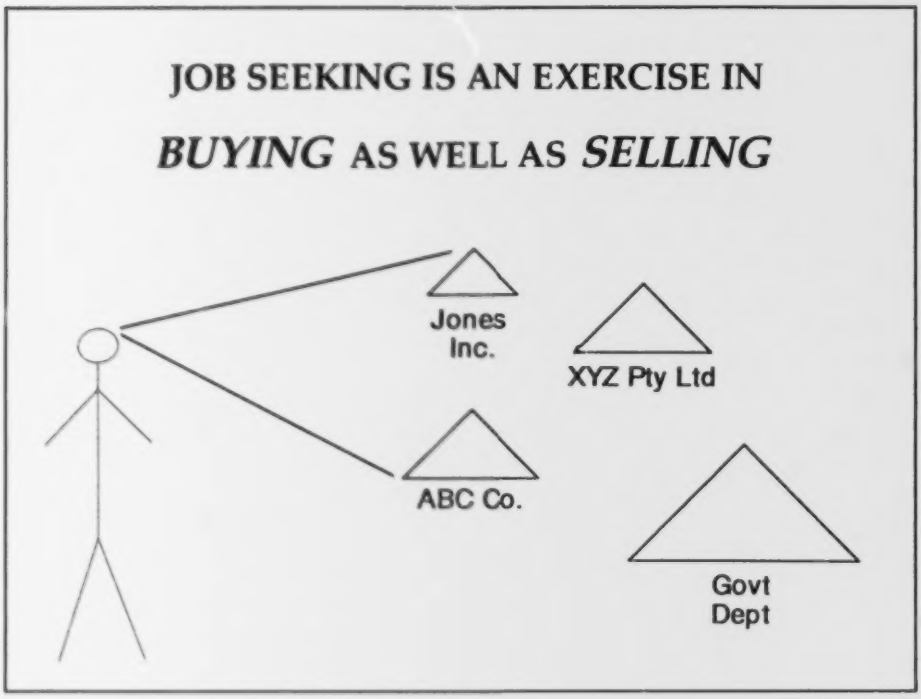
"What did you do . . . that you loved doing?
. . . that used your highest level of skill?
. . . that you want to do again in your new job?"

And you'll get the material for an exciting résumé—decidedly NOT a Career Obituary!

"A Résumé is NOT a Career Obituary" reprinted from *The Résumé Catalog: 200 Damn Good Examples* by Yana Parker © 1988 Ten Speed Press

Resources for the individual

Careers reference centres: These are now established in all State capitals and many country centres. They contain a host of material provided by the Federal Government in printed, audio and visual forms relating to the nature of occupations and educational prerequisites. Yet the users of these facilities are usually the young, often brought in by School Careers Advisers. There is no obvious promotional campaign to inform adults that the resources are also useful and available at no charge to them.



Networks: Women and Management, Women In Law, Women In Print, Women In Insurance, Women in Marketing, Women in Film and Television, Commercial Connections. These are examples of sources of help for those concerned about improving their personal career management. There are many more. In informal settings participants meet regularly, usually each month, to share concerns, information, strategies and to support each other in resolving worklife issues. That is their sole purpose. No equivalent male network currently exists which has this as its main reason for existence. Rarely are these networks listed in the telephone directory. They are discovered by making inquiries of people in the relevant industry.

These networks are characterised by exclusivity and a meal. One network meets for breakfast, another for lunch, others in the early evenings on weekdays. While of immense practical help to members and their guests they do have the limitation that they are in the same line of business with the exception of Women and Management. Hence some value may be lost by not meeting others in complementary employment activities.

Networking for women is a highly practical activity. I have been

a guest at several meetings and have observed how little time is wasted on social preliminaries. Within a short time of the meeting beginning, members are engaged in networking among themselves. Otherwise privileged information is exchanged. Those seeking information about the profession or industry are quickly identified and 'informants' linked up. The participants are vigorously demonstrating that a satisfactory job and a satisfactory career depend on accurate information.

It is daunting for many women to enter bars, clubs and sporting fraternities because of sex stereotyping. Women's networks provide a non-threatening and supportive environment in which to share information and secure uncomplicated companionship while wrestling with a career action decision. I have not observed an equivalent readiness for strangers to declare their needs for information and have them readily met within men's networks such as Rotary, Lions and clubs of the 'old school' type.

The mentor your clients select through a network facility should be a person they can trust—someone with whom they can be open and who is willing to be frank with them. They must have confidence in their mentor's skill, knowledge and ethics. Remember, they are not necessarily looking for a friend. They are seeking a person who will help them to manage their career rather than leaving it to chance.

NETWORKING

- Increases skills and self-confidence in obtaining information
- Demonstrates the personal quality of acting rather than waiting
- Stimulates a thoughtful appraisal of realities and options
- Builds referral base for further career explorations
- Often uncovers actual job vacancies

Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO): This is Australia's first classification and dictionary of occupations which has important applications to vocational guidance education and training, careers information and career counselling. It contains descriptions of several hundreds of occupations within the Australian economy and describes each in terms of a number of selected attributes and a broad definition of the tasks involved.

This resource aid is useful to career educators, career counsellors, students and counselling clients seeking to identify occupations which appear to match their needs and interests. As a preliminary aid in conducting the career transition stage of Opportunity Awareness a client could benefit from exploring its contents, providing it is realised that any printed description is limited in describing the realities of the job content and environment in which the occupation is carried out. Research interviews should therefore follow use of this reference source.

Publications: An increasing number of books to aid readers in their personal career development are being published locally, and others are imported. Their aim is to help readers learn effectively from their worklife experiences and guide them in how to use their new insights in the development of career plans and strategies. They demand not passive reading but action. They are not easy to locate within bookshops or libraries. Some are lodged under Psychology, others under Business, Reference or Women's Studies.

There are an increasing number of computer-aided databases being maintained and expanded which can be useful for career research. One example is the Register of Women in Non-Traditional Occupations compiled by the Women's Directorate within the Federal Department of Industrial Relations and Employment. You can find out the names of women who have direct experience in non-traditional occupations, who can act as role models. The Register administrators have established a forum where ideas, hopes, achievements, problems and solutions can be exchanged.

Careerskills Centre, Perth: I have been privileged to be involved in the design and selection of resources for an initiative by the Western Australian Government called the Careerskills Centre. The Centre is within the Department of Employment and Training where members of the staff of the Office of Redeployment are advancing the knowledge of assisting people plan for and make transitions into satisfying work. It is an impressive range of services directed at providing a wide range of effective help. People who are concerned by change, and eager to gain a greater sense of confidence about their future working life are helped by trained counsellors on a one-to-one basis or by trainers leading Career Planning Workshops. Users are helped to see how their skills may be extended, developed or applied in a better way to their advantage.

Information is provided within the Centre which extends the users' awareness of their employment options. Based in Perth, the service extends to the whole State and the Centre's staff travel to bring this assistance to people in large and small communities where changing technology, workplace patterns and social expectations are affecting their worklife.

The basis of thinking behind the Centre is this: the more influence that people have over their own careers, the more they will enjoy increased job satisfaction, better security and higher productivity. The emphasis is on facilitating this learning and self improvement for those who ask:

- Who am I?
- How am I seen?
- What are my options?
- How can I achieve my goals?

The role of the Centre is formally described as:

- The promotion of career planning, retraining and voluntary mobility amongst potentially surplus people;
- The promotion of the concept that modern careers involve change, ongoing training and personal responsibility;
- The provision of resources to assist employees and organisations with their career planning and management responsibilities;
- The facilitation of constructive work force mobility;
- The promotion of the concept that career management and personal development are positive ongoing activities.

Self-help support clubs

I don't mind telling you that I'm filled with trepidation. I feel I'm too old to be going out on interviews, that I shouldn't have to 'prove' myself all over again. And I'm pessimistic about my chances in the job market.

What can conscientious people not engaged in counselling do to support the career transitions of others? This question is often asked during the seminars I lead on worklife issues.

If you share this concern, here is a proposal that needs your time, rather than your employer's cash resources. It's a way you can provide constructive assistance which won't be viewed as a charitable handout.

Also, it could earn your employer or community organisation increased regard within the community.

A self-help club needs the minimum of formal organisation. They can be initiated by service groups such as Rotary, Apex or Lions, Chambers of Commerce, Employer or Industry Associations, or Unions. Alternatively, your firm could initiate one on the understanding that there is no commitment to employ those who join. All that needs to be provided is a meeting place and help with creating awareness of the self-help club's formation. If access to reference libraries, subsidised canteen, typewriters, stationery and telephones is also provided, that's a bonus.

Self-help clubs function on the principle that when people in a similar predicament meet they energise and catalyse one another and multiply the skills applied to each person's problems—not unlike Alcoholics Anonymous. They can help many readjust to active personal career management, and encourage people to climb out of the states of depression which paralyse some from making any attempt to improve their situation or emotional state.

Self-help groups have a useful humanitarian and practical purpose wherever there is an urgent need to protect the loss of self-confidence, alleviate the stress of being confused and/or feelings of powerlessness in adverse employment situations. They provide a forum for fellow members and help to avoid hasty or ill-conceived decisions. Members can test out their ideas and receive feedback as to whether their plans are feasible and realistic.

In established self-help groups, graduates of successful career transitions often return to the meetings and chair the proceedings, share how they secured their change, and bolster the morale of those still searching for an improvement in their worklife. People having difficulty in finding answers to their employment dilemmas often feel that they have an unusual problem preventing that success. After they've tried for what seems like too long a period, despondency sets in. The greatest single obstacle to achieving their employment goal is the loneliness which accompanies this despondency. The sort of loneliness which reduces self-confidence, and makes the problem more stressful than it really should be.

A self-help club can help share the weight of this situation. By helping in the formation, you could be providing for many the critical nudge back to constructive activity. Your gesture in organising a self-help club could break this paralysis of loneliness affecting so many in our community. If your business operates from 9 to 5, your facilities and

office/training equipment are laying idle outside these hours and could be used by people in real need. If you have a meeting or training room which is unused for part of the day, allow it to be the base for a self-help club facility. Take time out for the next ten minutes and consider who you can approach to get a self-help club under way. It's not much to ask . . . you might need this kind of support yourself one day.

I will always remember waiting at the CES in a queue filled with drunks, down-and-outs and derelicts with the muzak playing 'Feelings', wondering if this was all I was fit for.

Organisation sponsored support

For many years organisations did not perceive that they had any role in facilitating the career development of their members. Other organisations assumed total ownership for the career futures of their members. They dictated what should happen to the worklives of their members and, if this was unacceptable, the individual left. The more practical strategy is between these extremes. I have chosen to illustrate the nature of practical support from an organisation by describing career development facilities developed during the past four years within an Order of women religious. This entailed both organisation development aspects and career development training.

This religious order has existed for 130 years. Like most congregations of religious women, the Order has undergone significant change in recent years. It has experienced a gradual loss of members, reduction in number of entering members, and renewal and restructuring of the organisation of the activities and ministry (worklife) of individuals. As the overall membership of the Order has reduced, the need for more purposeful assignment of each nun increased. Also, the Order had been considering ways to implement the principles which emanated from Vatican II, one of the more significant convocations and theological reviews in the history of the Catholic church.

Values have been re-examined and clarified, and where and how nuns serve has been reconsidered. In layman terms, a form of corporate strategy review occurred.

The Order members are mainly of mature age, with few under forty years. Their worklife span exceeds the norm inasmuch as they work well into their seventies, subject to the constraints of their health. Also, the main occupations followed in the past had been in the primary

and secondary education teaching areas and in social work. This was considered too constraining, and career change to alternatives needed to be encouraged if valid alternatives could be identified. The Order supports tertiary education participation, both of a spiritual and vocational nature. It is quite common to have several members of the Order attending tertiary education institutions, either as part-time or full-time students.

Discernment process: The job choice procedure is known as a discernment. This involves a decision about where each member of the Order will serve for the next three years. The Order serves throughout Australia and in Japan and nuns usually experience frequent relocations.

Matching the needs and desires of each nun with those of the Order became an important management function and the responsibility of the senior members of the Order in positions termed Provincial. Those appointed to the position of Provincial report in turn directly to the Superior-General of the Order. The discernment decisions are ratified by the Superior-General before a job change takes place.

Since its formation last century the members of the Order were told where they will serve and in what capacity. They were used to obeying and rarely questioned the worklife directives. Today, the management of the Order believes that the occupational preference(s) of each nun is of considerable importance. This reflects the change in managerial behaviour, which is progressing from an authoritarian style to a participative one.

The Superior-General and the Provincials were keen to seek help in guiding members in how to examine their skills, interests and work environment preferences. In this instance, they sought this help external to the religious fraternity in which they operate. Their objective was to acquire understanding and practice in the methodology of career guidance and, in time, to become self-contained in the application of it to their ongoing organisational needs.

The engagement of myself as the external facilitator in the provision of organisational support was:

- to demonstrate career analysis and transition procedures;
- to advise on potential difficulties associated with organisational change processes;
- to recommend system changes and events to support the process;

- to bring to the Order an increased awareness of the world of work and the extent of the options within it;
- to train others in what information and techniques can be brought to bear on the career direction decisions of the nuns;
- to help motivate the nuns to exercise more personal responsibility for their worklife choices and show how to present their case well for them when made.

The self-confidence to seek new employment experiences by those not used to making their own choices can't be purchased: It must be worked on. The career transition journey is hazardous, the making of decisions vexing, and the convincing of others often difficult. But I have never met a career transition maker who does not reflect an inner strength and pride, and speak with respect for the journey undertaken, obstacles overcome and the goal accomplished. At the beginning of my association with the members of the Order I was not fully confident that their career transition journey would reflect these factors. A lot needed to be learned, experimented and possibly amended.

A partnership of mutual respect and frankness was established. The value systems I learned about and the context in which my help operated was as follows:

- choice of occupation would need to reflect the needs of the church and embody service to those hurt or restricted in some way by contemporary society;
- it should challenge the individual talents of the nuns;
- bring about a greater sense of personal freedom;
- expand horizons for consideration, as there are many forms and expressions of service that flow from religious missions;
- incorporate the fact that mobility in ministry broadens a nun's views and expands their talents to serve;
- initiation of new job placement review and decision may not always conform to a regular time frame when necessitated by personal or organisational needs;
- innovative alternatives to the past pattern of occupational pursuits are to be encouraged, subject to the review and endorsement of the Superior-General.

Selection of organisational support strategies: These were the following:

- nomination and approval of Provincial to be the referral person for queries from the nuns and liaison with me and the Superior-General;
- announcement of the career development support service to all nuns through the medium of the regular newsletter;
- invitation to the first residential career development workshop . . . voluntary attendance emphasis;
- schedule of several residential workshops dependent on positive outcomes from the first;
- management progress review meetings with senior members of the Order;
- provision of one-to-one counselling service to nuns nominated by Provincials where attendance at workshops was considered inappropriate, or their timing inconvenient;
- follow-up one-to-one counselling for post-workshop attendance where needed in specific cases;
- the integrity of a person's individual data shared in the process to be sacrosanct . . . she elects when and what to share with others;
- a flexible objective that these strategies be completed within twelve months, with the intent that the Order becomes self-sufficient in the future management of the career development support systems.

Career transition training aids were designed and printed and comprised of three workbooks and self-analysis instruments in the form of questionnaires.

The design of the residential workshops was primarily participant-interactive in nature and contained seven learning modules. An eighth module was added when, during the first educational event, it was revealed that nuns know little about job searching strategies, résumé writing and selection interview techniques in the context of today's environment where competitive job seeking becomes an integral part of achieving a transition to a new career. Pre-workshop preparation required each participant to complete a biographical analysis.

Learning experiences: The organisational support systems were reviewed after the first six months of their implementation. I recorded at that time the following, so that the support could be amended productively:

I have learned that nuns are used to introspection. They are well practised and not inhibited by it as are many lay people. Only the motivation needed to be provided to apply the same discipline to their worklife as to their spiritual well-being.

Their sense of sisterhood and responsiveness to helping one another within their own community of the Order is a strength which can and has been transferred to career analysis in group work.

The questions posed in career analysis methodology ask the nuns to consider a variety of personal gifts and skills and the degree to which their present ministry allows for their expression. Minimal amendment to the construct has been required to serve this purpose.

Despite general enthusiasm and participation in the educational process, nuns resist the concluding requirement. That is, to compile in written form a personal goal statement expressed in occupational terms covering both job task content and employment environment. This action is important to synthesise the learning and increased self-awareness as well as to assist each to communicate their desires to their respective Provincial.

Their general sense of inner peace lends itself to worklife contemplation in a more relaxed form than in many lay people. Dysfunctional levels of stress are less evident, though not entirely absent, as inhibitors to the process.

They lack an awareness of the increasing variety of occupational options within the terms of their Order's mission. The members have accomplished much in brainstorming additional occupations for consideration. Further work on occupational awareness is required. This needs to be progressively disseminated to members of the Order to help with the extension of their career horizons and appreciation of approved options.

Modern job seeking necessitates a form of boasting about one's transferable skills in order to compete effectively for a desired appointment. This does not rest well with the nuns. Further debate, support and encouragement is required here.

Many have low levels of self-esteem. Here, the value of interactive groups focussing on each member's issues in turn is proving the best procedure to overcome this inhibiting factor. They work better in groups than individually on the required 'homework'.

A further training and personal growth need has emerged. This is the need for guidance and practice in appropriate assertion

techniques. Skills building in assertion is required which would not confront their humility.

In addition, a training program on how to be an effective mentor to others is required.

The energy levels of the more mature-aged compare favourably with lay people in a residential workshop environment. The tuition process can be taken faster and longer (consequently more comprehensively) once the methodology has been illustrated effectively. There is also much less evidence of intra-participant competitiveness than I experience with other groups in a workshop setting.

Change of career direction is not the sole purpose of the project. Education has needed to be added to correct early indication of raised level of expectations that this was the purpose. While many nuns have made career transitions, many have been assisted to confirm that their current occupational endeavour is correct, right, and appropriate for now. The purpose is to introduce the methodology for how to conduct this form of review. Graduates of the process are being equipped with this, so that when the need arises it can be applied.

They are fun to work with! Good humour characterises the informal communications. They have less complaints than I am used to in lay organisations . . . but not zero . . . about the organisation of which they are members.

In addition to these support modifications, the organisation implemented the following:

- A comprehensive organisational direction plan was compiled and made available to all members. Subsequently, individuals had a much better idea of the overall needs of the organisation, and thus could reflect on their needs and desires as they relate to the plan.
- Residential workshops expanded in number. They developed as an integral part of the change process.
- A form of confidential attitude survey was carried out, supplemented by a number of face-to-face interviews. The survey elicited answers to the following:
  - i) the degree of satisfaction with the current discernment process by those who went through it;
  - ii) the degree of satisfaction with the process and outcome from

other significant perspectives, for example, Provincial's management responsibilities;

iii) the degree to which the career analysis education and support was perceived as a contribution to occupational placement options and choosing;

iv) securing suggestions for improvements.

The exciting world of work holds so much potential. But, when the time inevitably comes for organisations to change and members to move on to more satisfying work, individuals must be prepared to carry out the hard tasks of introspection and the research needed to determine what is appropriate and available; and have the courage to take the first step. The members of the Order are continuing to demonstrate this courage in abundance. In this instance, it is unlikely that the degree of career transition success would have been achieved without the visibility, honesty and consistency of organisational support.

The pleasure of helping

Worklife counselling involves its own special difficulties and challenges. The considerable amount of information acquired, analysed and used, the limitations of each client's situation, their fluctuating morale, occasional setbacks, and slow progress. Nevertheless, we make dreams happen. We restore flagging spirits, and are privileged to observe the emerging resilience of humans grappling with emotional pain. Concurrently, we strive to improve the manner of the support we apply; to listen to ourselves as we work and note where successful approaches occur and where enhancements to our style and methods can be made.

The pleasure of helping comes from doing what I want to do and like. Equally, it comes from observing the progress a person makes through the career transition process. I know many other counsellors feel the same way. I have chosen to include a number of quotations from my clients in the concluding phase of their transition journeys, which convey the pleasure of helping.

Thank you for helping this butterfly find her true colours!

I have decided to learn more about psychology and maybe about literature. I want to learn about counselling and to develop my skills in writing.

I'd like to improve my oral communication skills, maybe even learn to speak effectively in public in order to teach. I will develop my skills in lateral thinking, in creative problem solving and in drama, perhaps with a view to the use of drama in psychology and teaching. I want to learn about debating and arguing, and hypnosis. I do not wish for more knowledge about any aspect of my present job and career. I've learnt where my efforts should best be placed for me!

Changing my career has presented a valuable growth experience. I feel I now have power to do anything I really want to do. I am in control again.

The personal worth of taking the career actions was evident almost immediately. My life is easier and without so many conflicts as before because I am more content, happier and satisfied.

The cost of this change, or realisation of the truth, is without doubt the most shattering experience I have ever encountered. My experience has led to most satisfying results but, Boy! I will never forget these events.

This change boils down to no regrets. Oh yes, I would have liked it to be smoother and easier. But I set out to do the difficult and I've done it.

My change has been worth it. I know myself much better than I did. I've learnt that my personal resources, my own strength and capacity to hang in, are greater than I'd ever realised.

I don't say I enjoyed the traumas of the career transition experience which led me where I am but I'm happy they occurred—they let me face up to myself, my life and made me decide what I wanted to be and do.

The most amazing things have happened since mid-August. The first two days were filled with elation; I felt cut free from self-imposed chains of confusion and despair—but I was soon reminded of the old saying, 'What goes up must come down', and I hit earth with a thud.

I journeyed through waves of absolute terror. As I began to read Stop Postponing the Rest of Your Life my mind went completely blank (shock, horror, confusion). This went on for a week, and I now see that it was caused by the very action of doing something about my stagnation, depression, dissatisfaction.

Slowly, I began to pick exercises that were easiest, and kept up a steady pace until I had completed everything I felt I needed to do. Finally, when I completed my list of 'Skills likely to be used in Future Employment' I knew that I had made enormous progress. It fitted like a key to a lock.

I've moved to a new space internally and feel that I'm on my way to some changes.

Part Four: Career Development Support Systems

Employer's role • Why try? • Transfer and promotion actions • People's expectations • Organisational change • Award restructuring • Assistance to dual career couples • EEO and Affirmative Action • Effect of career development support systems • Targeting career development efforts • Implementing career development help • Productivity benefits • Examples of career development support systems • Surveys • Workshops • Workbooks • In-company career information centre • Employee inventory systems • Selection of support systems • Workshops as support systems • Workbooks as support systems • Career counselling • Worklife counselling • Resources for organisations • Career development consultants • Preference and interests measurement • International Journal of Career Management • ACER • ERIC • Published textbooks • Associations of career counsellors • People who have to go • Resettlement (outplacement) services • Morale retention • Choosing skilled outplacement help • Lack of understanding about career development • Cost and time • Realism about outcomes

Employer's role

Why try?: Why should an employer make an effort with career management initiatives? Why should funds be diverted to support the research, staffing, design and implementation of career development support systems? If employees want help should they not pay for it from resources external to the organisation, as some have in the past? Efforts by an employer can be justified on a pragmatic business analysis basis. It is not just another fashionable personnel procedure. It does have the potential for a realistic return on investment of such funds and distinctive realisable benefits to the organisation.

In this decade the aspirations of our work-force is being expressed more vocally. Their career futures are going to be characterised more by lateral and horizontal trans-functional career changes than by the vertical. Up is not the only way to go, as many people demonstrate

by electing to pursue other quests in order to improve the quality of their living. Others are being forced by personal circumstances to choose alternative directions that are not hierarchically orientated.

The strongest argument in favour of career development support systems is the inherent nature of people. I have never met an employee who would not like to become more worthwhile. The issue in career development is not the motivation of employees to participate in the process, but the identification and selection of appropriate techniques and procedures to help them. By helping employees with their careers organisations, in turn, help themselves.

To ignore the need to assist staff with their career development is to ignore the change in attitudes towards working life in the last decade. Moreover, the rate of information and technological change must be matched by efforts to help employees prepare for multiple careers and avoid the corporate costs of individual obsolescence.

Career effectiveness and life satisfaction are now recognised as being mutually dependent to a greater degree than has been the practice in the past. Both have their origins in man's quest for liberation and satisfactory forms of personal growth. In essence, it is about individual empowerment—the development of those skills and attitudes which enhance people's ability to exercise maximum control over their lives.

A major career development task is how to balance the individual's needs for freedom and growth with the organisation's needs for productivity and operational results. For this task to have a chance of success the employing organisation must develop a commitment to empower its employees to acquire the information they need to make informed and realistic career action choices and help them to communicate those choices to the relevant people within the organisation.

Transfer and promotion actions: Changing the jobs of current employees is less costly than external recruitment. While risks cannot be eliminated completely, there are fewer risks with a current employee than a person new to the organisation. To be able to transfer or promote from within, management has a responsibility to develop, work with and get to know staff better so that they can assess whether there are more appropriate task responsibilities for them and ensure that staff succession needs are met. And, as the environments in which organisations operate are constantly changing, to be able to staff newly emerging skills requirements.

To reduce the hazards of such moves, a substantial employer-initiated effort is required. Career guidance and career coaching is needed for adults to facilitate their career transitions and satisfactory outcomes for their employer. This requires people skilled in understanding and interpreting the interaction over the period of a person's worklife between aspiration, individual preferences, self-discovery, education, influence by others, opportunity taken or foregone, and the host of other experiences which make up working lives.

In career development the pendulum has swung away from the view that employers are responsible and accountable for the career progress of their staff. All employees were expected to do to ensure career advancement was to work hard and competently. The consensus view about career management today emphasises the shared responsibility but separate role of the employee and employer. Concern centres more on how far an employer should intrude into the personal plans and circumstances of their staff; how to integrate individual and organisational needs and contain conflict between them; how to help employees develop their career preferences.

People's expectations: Human resources are the main asset when combating a threat to organisational well-being, whether it is market share loss, technological change or government policy. These human resources have expectations about their employment life beyond the performance of their current job tasks. The nature of these expectations has not fundamentally altered over the ages, but they are now expressed more assertively. Subjugation to power, submissive behaviour and working in unpleasant conditions are no longer accepted without protest or dysfunctional behaviour in the work place. The more prominent expressions of people's expectations, such as preservation of their personal dignity at work, involvement in decisions which affect them, and the desire to contribute more widely than the restraints of the current job allow, are ignored unwisely by today's management. Career development has many facets which can facilitate these factors. There is little danger if high expectations among employees result from career development support. High expectations are compatible with realistic expectations if employees are provided with accurate information on which to base them. The time is opportune to secure employees' cooperation, not ignore their potential to help the organisation survive and grow.

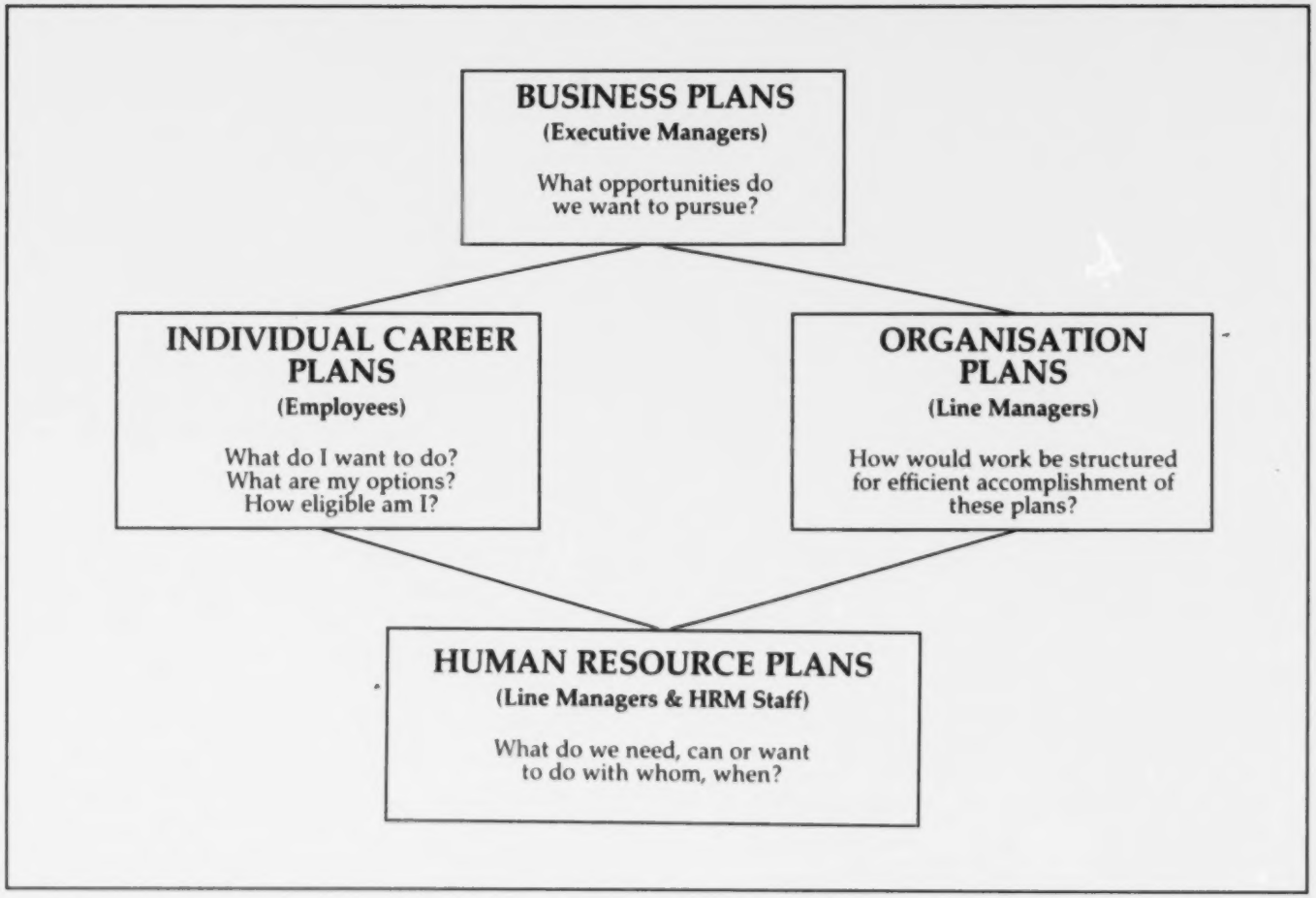
CRITICAL OBJECTIVE

To change attitudes of staff
from expecting advice
to self-directed exploration and
self-initiated career planning

Organisational change: Career development concerns itself with improved change. Organisations in Australia are currently in a state of fundamental change. Of the top 500 companies in Australia, 44 per cent have either been taken over or merged in the past 6 years. Other reasons for change include the need for increased international competitiveness, reduction in the cost of the Public Sector while maintaining service levels, the increasing use of new technologies and recognition of the benefits of new ways of organising work and more cooperation from employees. These require achieving the complex task of work place reform.

Change should be strategic and planned. Plans to ride out organisational problems and emerge in a stronger form demands of managers that action for change is thoroughly thought out and implemented. If employees are to respond flexibly and adaptively to change, it is important that they feel they have some degree of influence over where their career is heading and are employed within a culture which values them as people. Career development support systems provide a vehicle for this as their emphasis on the behavioural area of management science contributes to the understanding of organisational behaviour and the employee's role within it. Without this understanding, management actions are not likely to have the desired effect within the required time-frame.

Career development systems need to be designed to release people's motivation and creativity, not suppress them or stimulate resistance or career aspiration frustration. Just as most organisations seek to manage their enterprises by diverse approaches rather than a rigid management style, so the career development support approach for individuals incorporating multiple careers, changes in ambition, interests, and needs during employment is similarly diverse. Forms of mobility programs which incorporate these changes within individuals are required to prevent employees 'going stale'. The traditional assumption that there is a way to make an individual fit


BUSINESS PLANS
(Executive Managers)
What opportunities do we want to pursue?
INDIVIDUAL CAREER PLANS
(Employees)
What do I want to do?
What are my options?
How eligible am I?
ORGANISATION PLANS
(Line Managers)
How would work be structured for efficient accomplishment of these plans?
HUMAN RESOURCE PLANS
(Line Managers & HRM Staff)
What do we need, can or want to do with whom, when?

any given job through the 'right training and management' is now discounted and regarded as impractical, inappropriate and not cost effective.

The implementation of organisational change plans requires a high degree of collaboration between people and work groups, an open climate in which full optimisation of employees' competencies is striven for. The facility with which career development support systems can be developed as a response to a particular problem, and tailored to suit the culture of the organisation, makes them an appealing aid in achieving management's goals.

Managers need to be assisted to see the adoption or expansion of career development support systems as beneficial rather than just another operational activity. Managers may need to be provided with the opportunity to learn about and debate the practicality of implementing such career direction alternatives as dual career ladders, lateral moves, project assignments, matrix management and self-determining work groups. Career development practitioners need to evolve a regular program of management briefings and not reserve the defence of their endeavours to contingency events such as recessionary reactions or downsizing requirements.

Award restructuring: The rewriting of Awards—both Federal and State—is in progress. The objective is to make their contents more appropriate to modern economic, technological and industrial circumstances. Award restructuring has the potential to stimulate change in a number of areas including skill formation, training and working patterns and arrangements. It will widen employment opportunities for employees and re-define a broader range of career paths. The consequence of award restructuring is the need for managers to closely audit and review the skills used in their work place, identify skill shortages and develop actions which will improve the structural efficiency of the organisation.

Changing the legal base of the employer-employee conditions and relationship and conducting a skills audit is but one step. The next is to assist employees adjust to the changes and new career path facilities. They also need to be taught how to use them for their own career development actions. An efficient and effective process of award restructuring implies improving the efficiency of the employer, concurrent with providing employees access to more varied jobs. Career development support systems have a vital role in these endeavours.

Assistance to dual career couples: The complexity of the dynamics in dual career couple situations has significant ramifications for career development policy and practices. The organisational dilemma is to determine how far an organisation should go in involving itself with the personal relationships and non-work life of its employees. As most people consider the two most important things in their lives are loving and working, the least an organisation can offer are facilities for the voluntary participation in programs and counselling support for those concerned with these issues, in order to assist the resolution of conflicting demands that invariably affect work performance. How to make satisfactory trade-offs and compromises between careers and relationships are only two topics where assistance can be offered. But organisational staff who elect to provide this should explore the many ramifications before making such interventions.

With the growing number of dual career couples in the work-force, many with the same employer, organisations should think creatively about developing multiple career paths and designing work systems which allow for a healthy fusion of the family and worklife of members. Alternative work patterns, structured mentoring relationships and participative relocation decisions are but some of many issues that could be facilitated by career development support systems.

Organisations must deal with the shifting needs of their staff and the interaction of family and work. Career development facilities need to be designed not only for the different age and sex groupings of employees but also with relevance to the varying stages of their individual career life cycle. Care should be taken that each of these wide-ranging and different needs is serviced and that individual groupings do not appear to be favoured with help over others.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action: Both have undergone radical change over the past decade. No Federal or State legislation existed 15 years ago. Now legislation has prompted all employers with more than 100 employees to pay attention to the specified requirements, most of which relate to career management practices.

There is an urgent need for more organisations to develop procedures to accommodate the social revolution that is occurring. This is resulting in major changes in our attitudes towards work; the rights of women and minorities to pursue careers on an equal basis with males; the rights of workers to a safe and secure environment; and the growing

rights of workers to be legitimately involved in some of the decisions involving their own work and future careers.

Beyond opening certain job categories to women and minorities, affirmative action ultimately alters recruitment and selection procedures, paper and pencil tests, pre-employment health assessments, selection interviews, and other screening devices. As well, pension plans, compensation systems, performance appraisal processes, job analysis and classification systems and facilities for job bidding, and training and development are all affected. A properly designed career development support program has a direct EEO and Affirmative Action benefit at every stage.

Specific help is required for women to cope with their stressors—those that are created in her work environment and those that stem from her home. Counselling support help is required for male managers to come to terms with women managers and cooperate in team management processes with less obvious feelings of threat. If employers value the women they are employing, training and preparing for more senior responsibilities, the 'how to do my personal career planning' assistance should be an integral part of the skills development focus. Women need to be assisted with career planning help before being promoted, and provided with practice at developing such plans.

Before equity can be achieved and, most importantly, be seen to be achieved, there is a need for clearer job definitions and the specifying of skills required to perform them. From this evolves the additional need to train those responsible for selection, promotion and transfer decisions in how to evaluate people in skill competency terms and required knowledge rather than the current trend to evaluate length of periods of experience and/or level of formal qualifications. In this way individual differences will be acknowledged and appraised in a more equitable manner than the prevailing value matching approach taken within many organisations.

Career development theory and practice has significant implications for the design and implementation of practical EEO and Affirmative Action program activities. The current emphasis is to provide support systems which match the changing needs of the individual employee's life. When they provide help to an employee, EEO and Career Development staff will need to take care that the essential intertwining of the occupational career with the other domains of life is not ignored. This often means that career decisions which seem irrational to the observer in occupational terms, may nevertheless be rational in terms of the stability of the employee's total life. Each person will have a

unique orientation to their employment environment. Attempts will need to be made to identify them, and different career management strategies are likely to be appropriate for those whose orientations differ markedly.

Effect of career development support systems

Organisations which have implemented comprehensive career development support systems and arranged concurrent counselling services, the conduct of career workshops and life-planning training cite a variety of results. These include:

- improved matching of jobs with people;
- higher quality of data for manpower and staff succession reviews;
- better focus in the allocation of funds for training needs;
- cost justifications through the transfer of unhappy and unproductive employees to positions which suit them better;
- realistic career action and career growth plans tabled by employees at performance review discussions;
- creation, or restoration, of confidence in the regular performance review system as the subordinate and manager focus on more relevant data as a team rather than in a confrontation process;
- reduced need to recruit externally as greater capabilities of employees are revealed through Career Training workshops and/or data obtained through comprehensive Questionnaires and Skill Inventories;
- improved image of human resource service functions such as Personnel, Training, EEO, Employee Assistance Programs and Career Development Officers as employees experience assistance which benefits them and their employer;
- development of career transition outplacement services for those who decide that a career change outside the organisation is in their best interests.

Offering career development facilities for their employees can produce benefits to both the organisation and the individual. The organisational benefits, stated broadly, are:

- an inventory of employee skills and their current career goals ready for company use;

- better identification of future human resource needs;
- facilitation of organisational changes by improved understanding of the 'micro' or individual level of change;
- a facilitation of individual change by involving people in their own development plans;
- better anticipation of the various stages of development for the variety of occupations and professions within an organisation;
- an informed ability to deal explicitly with previously unrealised and hidden employee expectations;
- revitalisation and retraining of endangered segments of the work force.

For the individual employee, the benefits can include:

- the greater likelihood of making informed career choices;
- a lessened likelihood of surprise and disappointment in one's job;
- better identification of the sequence of job skills or credentials needed to achieve various career objectives;
- clarification of previously suppressed and conflicting career goals;
- a placing of career objectives in the broader mosaic of life, including the work place, employment environment changes, personal relationships, family life and community membership.

The key to successful career development lies in the depth of management attention to career management training needs for both managers and their employees. This must be intensive and recurring and encourage a process of self-examination and planning by each employee. It must lead to development of realistic personal goals and action plans by employees that in turn benefit the employer.

People will stay in the employ of an organisation if they expect that their future work will be desirable. To induce this commitment, information needs to be shared about what to expect in job assignments, career path opportunities, likely pay levels, methods of appraising performance, standards of work required and other outcomes important to them. Ignorance of these can breed assumptions. In turn, assumptions can stimulate erroneous opinions, even fear.

Targeting career development efforts

ORDER OF PREFERENCE	
1st	Potential work enthusiasts for good reason
2nd	The career minded and ambitious
3rd	People who have to go
4th	'Till tombstone time servers

An organisation should be selective with the targeting of career development support. It is unwise to launch a program of activities with ambitions that all in the organisation's employ will be subsequently energised to contribute more to the employer's objectives.

The allocation of employers' funds for career development support needs to be targeted at areas of real problems and impediments to efficiency and profitability. The focusing of early efforts towards those requesting them is not always the best. Satisfactory returns on funds invested can be realised when such efforts are initially directed at those who are potential work enthusiasts but show signs that they need good reasons to actually enhance their individual work performance. Those who vocally declare that they are working only for their retirement date are the least valuable for the allocation of career development support funds.

After directing efforts at the potential work enthusiasts, the employees who are obviously career minded and ambitious should not be neglected. In all organisations there are employees who should be terminated. The facilities for focusing career transition support are better serviced by external third party counsellors and/or skilled 'outplacement' helpers.

Implementing career development help

First, an organisation should conduct an audit to identify the needs it wants to satisfy and then develop an unambiguous strategy for implementing a program linked to those needs. Participation by relevant managers in the early development of career development

CAREER MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS

- Career Analysis Methods
- Skills and Capabilities Recognition
- Career Management Procedures
- Career Counselling
- Goal Setting
- Worklife Issues
- Conflict Resolution
- Careers Program Design
- Managers' Career Coaching Role
- Self-Help Resources
- Personal Needs Analysis
- Reality Testing
- Life Planning

support systems helps allay concerns that it will overburden them, and also builds commitment to the program.

The second step is to identify, select and develop the resources necessary to implement the program. Existing Personnel practices such as job posting bulletins, transfer and promotion procedures, performance reviews, and technical skills training should be audited and any shortcomings corrected. Fundamental to planning effective programs are the organisation's communications regarding the current and emerging career development resources available to interested employees. Such resources may include, for example, consultants, career planning materials (both reference texts and self-administered workbooks), and career-related software for computer-aided career development activities.

All supervisors and managers should be informed about the program and its system components before it is introduced to employees so that they can ask questions and clarify procedures. The program should subsequently be communicated widely, so that all employees know that it exists and also know the terms for eligibility for their involvement, and what is involved.

The most common void in the resources needed to support career development is realistic information on career opportunities. A good strategy is to build career information gradually, starting with simple charts that show job titles in each function by organisational level. To back up such charts, publish brief descriptions of the skill requirements and competency levels of each job. The removal of duty

statements which do not specify the skills required is an important part of this. Refinements may be made. For example, job titles can be grouped into 'families' of similar jobs and possible job progression lines (career paths) can be drawn.

Effective career development does need information about job requirements and career paths, remuneration opportunities and available resources for personal development. It is also important that employees learn much about the organisation's business—what it is doing and why, and its relevance to career opportunities.

STIMULI FOR EMPLOYER SPONSORED CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

- Increasing Staff Productivity
- Decreasing Attrition
- Organisation Change—Culture and/or Structure
- Response to EEO Laws
- Promotion from Within Rather Than External Recruitment
- Requests from Employees
- Arresting Dysfunctional Behaviour

Productivity benefits: The bottom-line productivity improvement from career development support systems results from:

- Increasing productivity through improved fitting of jobs to people;
- Discouraging competent, but currently frustrated or disillusioned, people from leaving;
- Reducing 'pirating' of capable employees by competitors, as staff perceive more value in staying;
- Creating opportunities to anticipate and prevent conflicts between the employees' wants and employer's needs;
- Providing valid information for human resource planning and succession;

- Using talent which previously remained untapped and unidentified, by extending awareness of skills and competencies of employees.

Organisations that have been successful in their career development support efforts have guided employees towards opportunities and resources that are actually available . . . not career paths based on unrealistic assumptions. The objective is developing more realistic—not raised—expectations. They have tried to dispel the 'up or out' view of a career, and instead promote other options such as lateral career moves and careers within specialised job areas or locations. An employee should not feel it necessary to be promoted to 'get ahead'. And employees need not change jobs or employers to have career progress. If career planning focuses more on personal development in the current job and less on promotability potential and career mobility, it can help create more realistic career expectations and lessen dissatisfaction.

Organisations which have implemented career development support regard their efforts as beneficial to both the staff and the organisation because they:

- help employees conduct their own career planning, which prompts the raising of questions that need to be answered and provide information on available opportunities and resources;
- enhance the value of taking considered risks to improve performance in the current job;
- guide employees to take considered advantage of organisational services available for career development, such as job tasks exchanges, job transfers or job rotations, consultative performance reviews, training and educational assistance programs;
- contribute to job re-design that makes the employee's current job more meaningful and significant to them;
- increase employee confidence in the organisation's career management services.

Examples of career development support systems

Surveys: Employees' degree of interest in and quality of their career management awareness can be ascertained by a survey. The selection and compilation of questions to be included in a survey is dependent on the motives for seeking the data. The motive may be an assessment

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Self-assessment aids
* Career planning workshops
* Self-help workbooks
* Pre-retirement seminars
* Diagnostic aids

Individual counselling
* Line managers and supervisors
* Internal human resource staff
* External worklife counsellors
* Outplacement skilled helpers

Internal information
* Job posting bulletins
* Job skill requirements Databank
* Career information resource centre

Organisational processes
* Employee skill inventories
* Employees' career path planning data
* Replacement and succession planning
* Skill gap assessments
* Diagnostic testing
* Job rotation programs
* Mentoring systems
* Supervisors' career coaching training
* Individual career progress review discussions

of what career development support systems are needed; the state of morale; the attitudes towards existing career development support; or opinions on career futures. The method of response is also important. The Appendix to this book illustrates both the questions and response design which is termed the 'Likert five-choice' approach. This example also facilitates the processing of responses by computer software. Other considerations in the design of surveys include: should the survey respondents be anonymous, be required to record their name, or offered the option? Many surveys reduce their potential for positive outcomes

LEGAL & GENERAL
CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SURVEY

In recent years we have sought opinions from staff on a number of occasions. This is again an occasion on which we would like your help.

Research associated with our Equal Career Opportunity Committee has suggested that we should consider establishing a Career Development Program.

A Career Development Program brings together a number of activities which help to identify and achieve personal and corporate goals. These activities may include:

Career guidance, information sharing, succession planning, job rotation, in-house training courses, on the job training and external study assistance.

We are keen to offer employees the maximum opportunity for personal growth and career development.

To help us frame a program which best meets the needs and aspirations of our staff we would like you to answer the following survey. Your individual answers will be kept confidential by an external consultant and the grouped results will then be published to all staff.

by delays in publishing the results for all respondents to read—or failing to publish them at all! Having invested time in obtaining survey results, you need to communicate the results and compile a list of required actions plus set a timetable for their implementation.

Workshops: A well-structured workshop encourages participants of all ages to assess their interests, abilities and circumstances, increase career awareness, set personal development goals and plans and prepare an agenda for discussion with their manager. Led effectively and incorporating the wealth of information about how adults learn, the group setting usually fosters constructive interaction and mutual

MERCK SHARP & DOHME (AUSTRALIA) PTY LIMITED

Career Development at MSD, a subsidiary of the US-based pharmaceutical company Merck & Co. Inc. and a market leader in the pharmaceutical industry with 407 employees, is an important element in the continued growth and success of their business. The philosophy for the recently implemented career development support systems is:

* An integrated system linked to the business plan
* Performance and skills based
* Line management ownership, human resource function assisted
* Programs and activities specific to operational concerns of each Division

A feature of the system is a career development model which charts the relationship between the functional positions and the skills required or developed in the positions.

The system allows for development of specific models for different areas within the company, with each model reflecting the business needs, the goals and functions of the area.

The three phases of implementation are:

* Design and development
* Training
* Implementation within specific areas

The program was preceded by research in Canada, America and Australia, the engagement of career system consultants and presentations to Executive Management. The first Division to experience the implementation was the Sales Division, where line manager training, career planning workshops, employee self-help workbooks and performance review integration are the main elements. Area-specific programs are being introduced in marketing, administration, medical and technical divisions.

STATE BANK OF NSW JOB PROFILING AND SKILLS AND CAREER ANALYSIS PROJECT

Financial Control & Group Treasury

This project contained many career development related features. It involved a job skills requirement audit from the employees' perspective, that is, those performing the tasks; also, job profiling and comprehensive career management training for employees and their managers. The consultants advised on the software evaluation criteria and selection for the job profiling data collection, processing and analysis, and subsequently worked with the selected supplier in Job and Individual Skills Questionnaire design and content.

A 119 question Career Development Needs Questionnaire was developed concurrently with the Job and Individual Skills Questionnaire. These questionnaires were developed using a highly participative process involving senior Finance staff. The Career Development Training Workshops trained all staff in career self-management and realistic expectations of career support systems and activities from their employer. The workshops were highly motivational in design and outcome. The project results provided the base data for an actual needs-related staff development program, plus revising the criteria for selection, promotion, transfer, succession planning, performance appraisal, and job evaluation activities. The training needs gap analysis has provided data for on-the-job and workshop training actions. The project has contributed critical data for restructuring the Division for decentralisation and the introduction of new technology. The career development support systems focused on:

* Job Profiling, skills audit and career management training
* Staff development and training needs analyses
* Organisational development and change facilitated
* Strategic and succession planning information
* Employee data management software
* Team building
* Staff morale improvement
* 'Unfreezing' of staff attitudes

The consulting team transferred skills to bank officers who will continue as agents of change. Managers and supervisors have been trained in Performance Review and Career Coaching skills. Conflict resolution training was incorporated in this tuition. The total number of employees participating was 145.

help among employees. A workshop should aim to assist each participant:

- learn what they can and want to do;
- express what has personal meaning and value in their current job and career;
- identify organisational changes that may impact on the quality of their worklife and non-work circumstances;
- understand the employer's system for transferring and promoting people;
- master the anxiety that accompanies change and the process of making choices;
- be a self-directed learner;
- develop improved self-esteem from learning more about self and reducing any sense of powerlessness over life's events;
- gain information that provides greater understanding of how to enhance current job and future possibilities with the current employer;
- develop valid information about the career development each one seeks and why they merit it.

Within a workshop setting employees can be taught a variety of methods for self-diagnosis and thereby make their own career direction assessments and decisions. They can be guided through a step-by-step procedure to identify and organise their skills and interests, work-related needs and values; convert these inventories into career themes and job objectives; and learn how to present what they seek and substantiate why they merit it to those with the power to act on their behalf. Yet, some organisations are reluctant to initiate such a training facility because they fear it may stir up the employees without management being able to respond to newly created expectations. On the contrary, my experience is that workshops do not ordinarily foment dissatisfaction—in fact, the learning process tends to validate extant careers because it give participants a more realistic picture of how their personal attributes mesh with the requirements of specific jobs.

Workshops are of good design if the tuition is presented in modules for each stage of the career development learning process. Module learning (i.e. step-by-step) enables participants to study each facet in depth and avoids them being overwhelmed by the immensity and inference of life planning and its management.

Each module should incorporate interactive learning experiences, practice in skills development through structured exercises, small group tasks, workbooks and role playing. Participants should be introduced to the critical concept of responsibility for one's own career development by completing prescribed homework between workshop sessions. To facilitate this and the development of participants' thoughts, queries and reports on personal actions, sessions should be separated by seven days. The homework should be so designed as to help them apply key points gained in the workshop sessions, prod them to gather more data to help resolve issues and provide a bridge between the learning modules.

Preferably, workshops should comprise a minimum of four days' attendance over a four-week period, followed by a review day six weeks after the concluding session. Trying to facilitate participants' learning of all that is required in personal career development in a shorter period may jeopardise the desirable outcomes.

It should not surprise you that the tuition design I have evolved over many years conforms to the four career development 'themes' of Self-Assessment, Opportunity Awareness, Decision Learning and Transition Training. In other words, the structure is different to the counselling help formula of SA + OA + DL + TT only in the method of delivery. The tuition focuses on helping adults of all ages to create a balance between career and personal life. Participants achieve increased self-awareness by analysing their interests, values, goals and capabilities, and how they match their current position. This self-awareness is critical for personal decision making and for establishing action plans to achieve change. The necessary change is identified during the workshop process by each individual, based on what job satisfaction actually is for that person. For each participant this will be different. The overall quest is one of facilitating the self-empowerment of those participating.

My experience in conducting over 90 workshops is that participants acquire new analytical skills, a greater sense of self-worth and a clearer perspective of career development. Consequently, they are better equipped to examine their relationship to the organisation and to assume more personal responsibility for the work that needs to be done. Management's gain in the process is an updated inventory of their human resource assets that can re-shape the organisation's own self-assessment.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Participant evaluation should be an important part of any training program. One way to do this is to ask participants one or two months later to record their views on the value of the workshop experience.

Here is a design suggestion which you can adapt to suit your situation:

Please complete this form to enable us to evaluate the career development and life planning training you have recently received. Any suggestions you make will be welcomed.

(a) The following is a list of potential outcomes from the workshop. Tick (✓) those that apply to you.

- ☐ Redesign of my job to make it more valuable to my career
- ☐ Increased satisfaction with my job
- ☐ Increased understanding of myself and my career needs
- ☐ A realisation that I am already doing what I like
- ☐ A new job outside the organisation
- ☐ Increased awareness of my skills and interests
- ☐ Knowledge of how to develop contacts to gain information
- ☐ A résumé appropriate for my next career move
- ☐ Identification of a job I can prepare for (a 'target' job)
- ☐ Contacts in other departments who can help me in my career
- ☐ Contacts in my current department who can help me in my career
- ☐ An improved relationship with my boss about my career
- ☐ Information about job possibilities
- ☐ Feedback from others about the viability of different career paths
- ☐ A career action plan
- ☐ Implementation of my career action plan
- ☐ Enrolment in other career development programs or training courses
- ☐ Talks about career development plans with my peers
- ☐ Increased motivation to work actively towards developing my career
- ☐ A new job within my department
- ☐ Less satisfaction with my job
- ☐ A new job in a different department

(b) Did the training program meet the Trainer's stated objectives? YES/NO Please comment:

.....

(c) Which of the sessions contributed most to achieving the objectives?

.....

(d) Which were the most valuable sessions for you, and why?

.....

(e) Which were the least valuable sessions for you, and why?

.....

(f) Has this training succeeded in making you more aware of self-help measures for progressing your career? Please comment.

.....

(g) What additional information or practical work do you feel you still need in managing your career?

.....

(h) What changes could be made to improve the effectiveness of the training?

.....

(i) Any additional comments?

.....

.....

(j) Name (optional)

.....

Workbooks

The growth of interest in personal development and escalating acceptance that self help is the practical method for managing careers has been met by the publication of a range of workbooks. Their contents usually require that the individual records their responses to a series

of questions covering many aspects of their living and employment experiences. These recordings may be within the workbook or on separate paper. The objective of these workbooks is to improve the self-awareness of the reader and, by the nature of the design, to lead the person to decision making. Many purchase such workbooks and read them without obeying the instructions to record their responses. Consequently, they often view them as being of little help. They are workbooks which demand hard work, adequate time to complete, and pauses for reflection between the times applied to this activity.

There are workbooks on public sale useful for participants of in-company career workshops or as clients of an internal or external

OUTCOMES REPORTED FROM WORKBOOK USE WITHIN A PUBLIC SECTOR DEPARTMENT

Increased satisfaction with my job
Redesign of my job to make it valuable to my career and employer's needs
Increased motivation to work actively developing my career
Less satisfaction with my current job
A realisation I'm doing what I like
Increased awareness of extent of my skills and interests
Knowledge of career path opportunities
Clarification of my employer's expectations
A career action plan and schedule
Learned how to network and importance of networks and mentors
Improved relationship with my boss
Enrolment in development courses specific to my job and self-improvement needs
Resignation, as realised I'm not benefiting my employer nor self through staying
Clarification of what has actually been disturbing me about my worklife
My self-concept has been clarified and enhanced
Know more about my employer's career support services
An improved résumé suitable for internal job applications
Confidence to negotiate task swapping with colleagues to enrich my job performance
Understanding who is responsible for what, i.e. employer and me

counselling service. A recent contribution to this range of workbooks is the *Career Planning Workbook* by Dr Barbara Moses (BBM HR Consultants, Toronto 1989).

Several organisations are engaging consultants to collaborate in the design of structured analyses evolving into a workbook which they publish and issue to their employees. They can be used by employees working alone or as set exercises during career development workshops, or as assigned homework between learning sessions. The issue of a workbook by an organisation contributes to demonstrating the employer's concern for people's careers. In the process, they teach employees to take ownership for their own development, and encourage commitment to its success. The completion of workbooks can help an employee improve their preparation for performance appraisal and career progress reviews with their manager.

The complexity of self-assessment and the underlying psychological processes involved require that the design of structured analyses and their associated questionnaires are carried out by informed people who have first-hand experience of the nature of the career transition journey. Otherwise, the publication may fall short of its objectives when used by employees.

In-company career information centre: A basic career information centre can be established quickly within an organisation. Information existing already within the organisation but dispersed in many locations, cupboards, past newsletters, filing systems and libraries, can be collated into one facility which employees can readily access. Additional texts, workbooks, audio cassettes and videos, work stations, PC computer facility, organisation chart files, job description folders, study skill aids, stress management materials, training course information, display and bulletin boards, posters, and a Centre newsletter can be added according to need and budget. The best design is one which requires self-help by the user and demands little time commitment from supervising staff.

A career information centre functions imperfectly when located within an existing library, personnel department or social facility centre. It needs to be prominent, easily located, accessed with ease, well publicised, and attractive and orderly in appearance. A career information centre provides visible evidence to employees that the employer is actively concerned with their career futures. It encourages those who are really concerned about their personal career management, and is of no value to those who simply complain that

their career progress is neglected. The primary purpose is to serve the information needs of employees. It exists to help them make career enhancement and educational planning decisions.

Planning considerations for a career information centre involve clarifying the purpose and objectives, defining the likely users, developing a policy and procedure to reduce likelihood of confusion or conflict over use, choosing a location, preparing an operational and materials acquisition budget, selecting furniture and equipment, attracting users by promotional methods, and designing and implementing measurements of effectiveness after the initial period of use. There is no formula for the perfect careers information centre, but much can be gained by analysing your particular occupation, employer, industry and environment to determine the type and extent of information service pertinent for your own population of potential users.

Employee inventory systems: With computer-based personnel information software, employers can record, store and retrieve data about employees, the positions they occupy and their career aspirations.

The procedure for creating an employee inventory system should include:

- consultative and participatory processes to ensure acceptance of the outcome and support of those involved—both management and employees;
- establishment of a cooperative climate for the acquisition of comprehensive and accurate employee data;
- a methodology that is uncomplicated and readily understood by participating employees;
- information collated from every position holder, as employees best know their current jobs and the skill and competency levels required;
- data that is quantifiable to facilitate a variety of analyses;
- a design which anticipates future requirements beyond the immediate purpose, so that the database can be extended rather than rewritten or re-compiled.

Employee inventory systems can assist the production of detailed position descriptions; represent both positions and job holders as profiles in graphic bar chart form so that visual identification of skill gaps can be made, and illustrate where training could improve both

employee contribution to the job demands as well as their personal development.

Such systems can provide data to assist management decision making concerning:

Award Restructuring, Training Needs, Career Path Options, Performance Measurement, Job Design, Classification and Evaluation and Organisational Restructuring. To achieve this, information needs to be incorporated in the database about:

- employee and position identification;
- position tasks and duties;
- knowledge, skills and abilities;
- decision making, financial, human resource responsibilities, physical and social aspects of contacts for each job.

There are many software products available which can be purchased, and most enable access to existing payroll or other personnel data systems.

Collection and maintenance of data for such systems can be costly. To make systems cost-effective, the skills recorded in the systems should be limited to those evaluated as essential in the various jobs in the organisation; job requirements should be defined so that the inventory may be used to identify appropriate candidates. An inventory which does not include employees' preferences for target jobs is of limited use in identifying individuals for possible future jobs or in guiding individuals toward alternative career opportunities.

Selection of support systems

The inherent nature of management involves making choices once a policy has been determined and options researched. Career Development is no different. While an ambitious program may include all of the support systems mentioned, an organisation may choose to select one or more for its program.

There are benefits and drawbacks associated with each. What follows is a summary of the advantages and disadvantages associated with career development support systems such as workshops, workbooks and career counselling, and third party worklife counselling.

Workshops as support systems: When workshops are offered during scheduled working hours this demonstrates the validity of the

employer's intent to facilitate employees' career development. Such events are useful for communicating and clarifying the employer's objectives. Common issues can be addressed at one time. The interaction between employees appropriately led by an experienced trainer increases the likelihood of learning tasks being completed. Participants can help each other by recalling, organising and interpreting information. Each participant can test out their developing options and proposed strategies for implementation with fellow participants and receive useful responses. In the process each participant creates a support network which may assist implementing career decisions. Subject to an appropriate environment being provided, the self-exploration and skills assessment can be carried out without interruption.

The logistics and costs of any training event are aspects which often deter management from in-company workshops or those conducted at off-company sites. A further problem is that critical choices and judgements cannot be made by individuals within a prescribed time-frame or one concentrated session. The nature of career review requires a different span of time for one person compared to another. Some important career action skills such as research interviews cannot be developed within a training room. They need to be practised in 'real-life' settings. So participants need to be encouraged to carry out 'reality' testing and other assignments between training sessions or at the conclusion of the workshop. Participants are not all at the same stage of career maturity nor grappling with identical career related problems at the same time. The employer's response to a declared need may be slower than in a one-to-one counselling situation. A skilled trainer is required to ensure individual differences and needs are accommodated. Equally, participants are not necessarily ready or willing to address the same things at the same time or share their information in front of others. These are formidable problems, but are common to most training situations conducted within a workshop setting. The selection of the trainer and/or trainer's assistants is a critical factor in overcoming these disadvantages.

Workbooks as support systems: Many publications of this nature are imported. Care must be taken to check 'cultural' aspects of style, vocabulary and semantic problems of the text. Care in the design must ensure focus does not dwell disproportionately on the negative aspects of employment. The structure of the learning process needs to be evaluated to ensure that it conforms to what is desired and fulfils

IBM AUSTRALIA LIMITED

Workbook Example

IBM EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Extract from Foreword

This employee development booklet has been designed to help you plan and manage your career and personal situation. This booklet also includes instruments so you may assess yourself and take responsibility for your own course of development . . . This guide is intended to assist you in assessing your own interests, talents, skills, strengths and weaknesses. It will help you better understand the things which give you personal satisfaction and enjoyment and which allow you to make a significant contribution. No one can know you better than you—nor be as interested. You are the only one who can determine what you like and what you want in terms of your future work . . . Employee development exercises, discussions with your manager and the preparation of a development plan will not guarantee movement to higher level jobs. However, they are intended to help you clarify your work objectives and to define a program to help you work towards your goals . . . You should be aware employee development is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you may decline.

Employee Guide
Table of contents

Employee Development
I Foreword
II Self-assessment
1. Who am I?
2. Life goals
3. Satisfying accomplishments
4. Least Satisfying accomplishments

III Job profile and skills inventory
1. Identifying job content skills
2. Evaluating transferable skills
3. Evaluating self-management skills
4. Your job profile

IV	**Attitude**
	1. Satisfaction
	2. The attitude curve
	3. Placing yourself on the attitude curve
	4. The quality of your relationships
	5. Your definition of success
V	**Goals**
	1. Inventory of likes and dislikes
	2. Goal reality test
	3. Goal/objective planning
VI	**Where do I go from here?**
	1. The development road-map
	2. Programs and activities available

the organisation's purpose in providing workbooks to staff. Workbooks by definition require the user to apply personal effort. If too much text is contained within, the user may treat it as a text for learning rather than a learning-by-doing procedure.

Workbooks do emphasise learning through self-initiated exploration and discovery. Users can select the sections that are more pertinent to their current concerns. Used as assigned homework between training sessions, workbooks assist the continuity of learning and involve staff in helping themselves. Some questions and structured analyses require users to respond to aspects about their careers and non-work life which they may prefer to analyse privately and reflect upon before responding. Workbooks facilitate this.

A workbook helps a manager or trainer to monitor employees' progress towards the resolution of their issues. The completion of a workbook shows evidence of the employee's commitment to self-help. The personal nature of responses within career development workbooks can cause resistance among users who may not be prepared to record data about themselves, even though assurances about personal privacy may have been given.

Thoroughly researched, tested and pleasantly designed workbooks save an organisation the effort required to design and produce their own. In recent years I have contributed to situations where an organisation wished to produce its own workbook for 'image' reasons with its employees, but required learning construct designs which have already been validated, to be incorporated within it. This latter procedure has many useful aspects to it.

MANAGERIAL SUPPORT

ROLES	BEHAVIOURS
• Coach	• Process Control
• Appraiser	• Listening
• Adviser	• Feedback
• Referral Agent	• Goal Setting
• Information Provider	• Planning

Career counselling: In the organisation which believes in the value of counselling and has developed a policy and procedure well-known to staff, problems will be detected at an early stage, and the employee will feel safe enough to seek counselling. The key factors are the climate of the work place, personality strengths of the managers, employer's policy, and the competency of those staff involved in counselling at dealing with an employee's problems. Work-based counselling has the potential to contribute to organisational goals. Inherent in this is the danger that only the needs of the employer are served. Essentially, counselling is a forum for individuals: a facility whereby they can express their apprehensions and emotions, while being assisted to manage their own career futures.

Counselling is a more personalised way of providing career support, yet its success requires the cooperation of the employee. The counsellor can adapt more readily to the individual than in a workshop environment. Confidentiality can be ensured. Rarely can assistance be provided in one consultation. Hence, counselling often requires a series of helping encounters when the timetables of both the counsellor and client need to be co-ordinated.

A concerned counsellor can contribute to immense changes in the life of a troubled employee. The counsellor's knowledge and skills are key factors. Poor counselling can do more harm than good. It takes years of practice for most people to be really effective at the art. Management ability and counselling skill are two different things. In fact, counselling involves a high degree of artistry and creative people can find their involvement in the role quite stimulating. It demands an understanding of the nuances of the human personality and knowledge acquired through personal experiences of the factors affecting careers within organisations, which are not normally cited in textbooks.

A MANAGER'S THOUGHTS AFTER BEING COUNSELLED

The total loss of confidence, the feelings of devastation and inadequacy are ones which I will never forget. Things had been building up over some months, but I realised that something had to be done to escape the nightmare when I started to check the insurance policies! So I resigned, or at least I walked out in a terrible state, fully intending to come back and clear my desk as soon as I could face it.

I couldn't understand why this was happening to me. I had always thrived on a degree of insecurity—the feeling that I had to strive to do better. I had certainly been through, and handled, highly stressful situations—including strikes, setting up new organisations, moving house. However, underneath I had always been confident, although I would rarely admit it.

I was extremely lucky that my company were not prepared to accept the situation as it stood. They arranged for me to attend a counselling session.

The only word I can use to describe the first session was 'surreal'. Everything seemed strange—I wasn't sure why I was there and I nearly walked out at least twice. It was only during the second session that it began to make some sense, although I suspect that the whole process will never make total sense to me.

The question is, 'Does counselling work?' I am back in my old job, I have better relationships with my family, I see the world in a much wider sense. I notice and respond to more of what is going on around me—beauty, colour, other people's feelings, are all more important to me. I understand my drives, and I hope that I am a 'better' person.

The time I spent away from the job was clearly an important factor, as was the strength of my family, which was marvellous. I had always been the strong one and I thought I had let them down. These were very powerful influences, but I now recognise the skill of the counsellor in probing, picking up minor points and helping me to recognise why the situation arose, and what I was capable of. Above all, it helped me to appreciate that I could become a much fuller person. In the past everything had been task-orientated, and success had only been measured in terms of achievement.

> Given the circumstances which were clearly wrong at work, it was inevitable that something was going to happen, and it did. Without counselling I may well have eventually returned to my job, but I am absolutely certain that with counselling I was able to return earlier, and face the first few difficult days more evenly. Above all else, my life is now much fuller, and I and my family are much happier.

Worklife counselling: Providing counselling support to an employee to find a clearer sense of direction can benefit management as well. Problem areas can be improved upon when information which does not compromise the confidentiality of the counselling is shared. An in-company career development support service can be ineffective for some people who may be reluctant to discuss their private and personal career interests with another employee or in front of workshop participants. An approach that gives more time for reflection and ensures confidentiality is referral to a carefully chosen counselling resource external to the organisation.

A typical third party worklife counselling service relating to career issues will provide a confidential service to employees and help them find solutions to the following issues in their worklife:

- Coping with uncertainty about their future career;
- Lack of confidence about personal potential;
- Recognition of real or imaginary barriers to implementing career actions;
- Clarification of interests and values, skills and abilities;
- Depth and extent of information about career path alternatives;
- How to relate to superiors and/or colleagues at the place of work;
- Implementing change in career aspirations or lifestyle;
- How to cope with feelings of job boredom and depression;
- Questioning of the present qualification level and training;
- Adjusting to changed work routines and reorganisations;
- Feelings of need for recognition and reward.

The counselling service support is likely to include:

- Systematic assessment of abilities, qualifications, experiences, preferences, and career plans, so that employees in need may gain a fuller appreciation of all that they can offer to their employer;
- Guided exploration of career action alternatives, since employees often have a restricted knowledge of how their background can best be put to use;
- Help with the preparation of a résumé where relevant (a valuable procedure for negotiating current job enrichment, promotion or transfer);
- Assertiveness training to improve self-presentation;
- Advice on stress management where adverse effects are occurring in the employee's living.

Resources for organisations

Career development consultants: A growing number of people have chosen the career development subject area in which to specialise as consultants. Many are former Personnel Managers or Staff Development Trainers. Others come from Production and Marketing disciplines. Several have formed the Career Development Interest Group within the Australian Institute of Training and Development (A.I.T.D.) and meet regularly to share experiences and research about their work with both organisations and individuals. Various academic institutions are including career development within their syllabi for postgraduate and Masters study programs. Organisations interested in locating consultants with whom to work on career development support systems can contact either the A.I.T.D. or the Business Faculty of their local tertiary education institution.

Career development consultants use a combination of organisation development and personnel management specialities. Their role has a dual orientation. First, to be knowledgeable and practised in the use of a range of activities and resources which an employer may use to help their employees set and achieve their career objectives. Second, to ensure that in the process of implementing these forms of assistance the organisation's need is met to recruit, develop, and move its employees according to its own short- and long-term human resource needs. Attention limited to what the employee wants or only

to what the organisation wants is not a recipe for effective career development advice and practice.

The selection of a Career Development consultant is critical to the success of an intervention into an organisation's operations. Being a social system, the organisation's members can impede or assist the external consultant's effectiveness. As a business operation an organisation is a complex entity with many facets of attitudes, culture, and interconnecting procedures—many not formalised in printed form. An 'outsider' needs to learn and comprehend this complexity, often within a short time-frame, in order to be able to advise, guide and monitor progress of the Career Development effort. As organisations operate within an environment of constant change, the consultant's awareness of and appreciation of interfacing events in the industry, community and nation in which it functions is important. All these produce a formidable challenge in the selection of a Career Development consultant. It places considerable responsibility on the person making the selection.

A further difficulty exists. Because Career Development is a relatively new form of management science, the record of past example is not wide. This can limit the identification of an appropriate consultant, because few actually are trained and fewer still experienced in the various strategies and actions associated with it. References of past successful examples are often rare and difficult to obtain.

Despite these hazards, you should apply the same problem analysis approach taken to other business problems. First, you should identify the apparent problem you want to be resolved and consider deeply whether there exists an underlying real problem. The nature of the problem(s) should dictate the criteria upon which the search, identification and selection of the consultant is based. This approach is important even though you may expect the consultant to investigate what problems need to be addressed. Abdication of the need to make a preliminary diagnosis and formulate a conclusion could lead to error.

The behavioural style and verbal skills of the consultant would need to be appraised. Knowledge of techniques alone will not ensure success. Theoretical study in Career Development cannot be a substitute for a pragmatic outlook, business acumen and sensitivity to human relationship issues. Evidence should be sought that the proposed consultant has these qualities.

When the selection process is complete the terms of the engagement should be specified in writing and a written acknowledgement of their acceptance by the consultant secured. The establishing of the terms

GUIDELINES ON GETTING RESULTS FROM ORGANISATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- Use a blend of instruments and data gathering techniques to target specifically felt needs. Set specific objectives and evaluation criteria. Talk business, not career development!
- Spend time to determine the cultural assumptions of the organisation.
- Obtain top management sponsorship by being acutely aware of political processes and motives.
- Examine power and decision-making processes and develop strategies to influence key players.
- Determine a linkage between career development and the business plan.
- Define the role, benefits and costs of career development. Don't hide elephants!
- Examine the consistency between your career development process and human resource systems (i.e. selection, performance, appraisal, rewards and development).
- Highlight the responsibilities of the organisation, the manager, the employee and the career development function to the success of the process. Minimise dependency and maximise commitment!
- Use a wide range of development methods.
- Maintain your energy level for the process of reviewing your strategies. Ensure you have an adequate intellectual and emotional support mechanism.
- Start with a small pilot trial and revise your strategies for the longer term. Be continuously aware of the changing variables affecting your outcomes.
- Rigorously market success by rewarding key players for their positive contribution.
- Allocate time to refine your understanding and application of key career development concepts.

Contributed by: Excel Human Resource Development
(A Career Systems Consultancy)
PO Box 44, Parramatta, NSW 2150
Tel. (02) 683 4940

in detail for the engagement is as much for the protection of the consultant's reputation as for the organisation in which the Career Development activity is to take place. Consulting engagements in general have a poor history of misunderstanding between the two parties when this has not been established and agreed to in writing.

The measurement methods and reporting lines/procedures for monitoring and assessing results would be a key element in such an agreement.

Defining the objectives, agreeing on the methods, determining the timetable are all elements of the approach necessary to ensuring the organisation receives value for money. The very nature of Career Development interventions can make measurement difficult; culture and attitudes usually feature in the career consulting process. Precise measurement may be difficult. Hence, an informal and frank exchange of views should be occurring between the employer and the consultant throughout the engagement.

Preference and interests measurement: Decision Preference Analysis (DPA), published by NIS Associates, is a self-scoring diagnostic aid which accurately measures personal preferences. The aggregate time to complete is twenty minutes. As almost all jobs demand a preference requirement if the tasks are to be successfully undertaken, the measurement of a person's preferences coupled with an analysis on the same criteria of the job they are currently doing or considering changing to is important. Jim Kable and Dick Hicks, while colleagues at the Department of Management, Queensland University of Technology, researched and designed DPA with well-established validation procedures to cover measurement of alternative job preferences, identifying training needs and to assist the management of mismatches between person and job tasks. For career development purposes DPA has many applications. My experience using this aid over seven years supports their claims.

DPA is also useful in career pathing which is not linear. Linear career paths are based on the assumption that a Marketing Trainee should advance to Marketing Officer and in turn to Marketing Manager. DPA expands career path options by identifying cross-functional boundaries and contributes to highlighting job matches other than the 'traditional'. There is no reason why an employee cannot be moved from accounting to sales and on to production management, providing the person's preferences are matched as part of a planned career progression. "Ability is trainable; preference is not." states Kable. "In career path planning

the ability of the incumbent in his or her present job is largely irrelevant. Promoting only on the basis that the person is doing well is hazardous and illogical. People are not that simple. Neither the person nor the organisation will benefit [by] using this criterion for career advancement."

The concept of focusing diagnostic aids on preferences in career analysis is not new. The most widely used vocational interest instrument in the world is the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII), originally developed over forty years ago. The SCII does not elicit information regarding intelligence, aptitudes, or skills, but interests and attitudes by means of 325 questions. DPA achieves a similar objective, but has the advantage of being shorter and more readily interpreted by the counsellor with the client present. DPA also has the rare quality that it was researched, designed and validated in Australia.

While training in scoring and interpretation is a prerequisite to administering DPA, its very nature has a significant contribution to the person completing it. With support from counselling, people can carry out their own Opportunity Awareness. Armed with greater knowledge about themselves derived from DPA and the criteria for matching alternative jobs, they can research their own job content changes or career moves within their employment environment and present their case for consideration to the appropriate manager. The self-help feature of DPA is particularly appealing. It can stimulate employees to take more responsibility for their own future and to accumulate well-prepared data for deciding their own career actions. They can then prepare a case stating what they seek and why they merit it in ways which illustrate the benefits to both the employee and employer.

Another diagnostic aid with somewhat similar characteristics to DPA is the Work Aspect Preference Scale (WAPS), also researched and validated within Australia, devised by Robert Pryor, and published by ACER. WAPS is a psychological measure constructed to assess the qualities of work that individuals consider important to them. WAPS is used with Year 10 students, higher education students and adults. It is principally intended for use in a vocational counselling context to:

- stimulate the exploration of preferences in relation to work;
- provide relevant data for both counsellor and client to facilitate vocational exploration and confirmation or negation of decisions associated with an individual's career development.

The caution when using psychometric aids such as DPA, SCII or WAPS is that the person reviewing their results may be more passive and less critical because of the 'authoritative' image of the printed form of the aid. Alone, they are not sufficient data for effective career development actions. They serve their best purpose as ancillaries to other forms of self-assessment. The person completing the DPA Personal Profile Instrument should be given time to reflect and discuss the results. He or she may need to be helped with the concept of preferences rather than ability being important in career planning, as many have the heritage from their education which inferred one is only supposed to be interested in work for which the ability has already been developed. The person may also err in linking the results with only one job alternative unless the counsellor assists in expanding the value of the information to embrace more than one career alternative. Through preference measurement a person can obtain indications either confirming his or her existing feelings or giving new insights into self. Interests is the factor which motivates a person to acquire the experience, and practice in this experience produces the ability. Preference measurement is rapidly overtaking aptitude measurement in the field of psychometric testing as awareness of this fact increases.

International Journal of Career Management: This journal draws on research findings and practical in-company developments that have devised new ways of creating flexible career paths to maximise individual potential. Writers from around the world contribute to such topics as human resource planning and forecasting, ability and skills testing, new career paths and structures, validation studies of selection tests, descriptions of career workshops and their outcomes, new concepts and programs in career management.

It is a vehicle for communication among academics, researchers and practitioners in career development and personnel management areas. Human resource professionals could benefit from its contents if they are engaged in career choice counselling, personnel administration, manpower planning, training and organisational development.

Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER): This service organisation has played a key role in nurturing the use of psychometric tests and measurement as an integral part of the career guidance process. It is the main source of test development and diagnostic resource material within Australia. ACER is undertaking extensive

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CAREER MANAGEMENT

Aims

The International Journal of Career Management facilitates communication between all those who ask the question—how can we help people develop their careers and talents within the rapidly changing work environment? Academics, researchers and, most importantly, practitioners, pool their findings to offer advice on all the issues facing employees, managers, and personnel and training specialists. The journal concerns itself with employees at all levels across a range of industries and at every stage in their career. The aim is to furnish readers with a total view of all the issues and developments surrounding a topic that is now high on the agenda of modern organisations.

Coverage

A wide range of articles cover both the theory and the practice of all aspects of career management, including:

- new career paths and career structures
- ability and skills testing
- psychological testing
- vocational testing and guidance
- career assessment workshops
- individual and team goal clarification
- career development programs
- career path stories from around the world
- human resource planning and forecasting
- recruitment and selection technologies
- coaching and counselling
- career path and manpower surveys

All articles lead to practical recommendations for future action. Readers will also find the special section on new products, programs, assessment instruments, events and books particularly useful in keeping up-to-date in this rapidly developing field.

(Publisher: MCB University Press, London)

review of computer application software that is potentially useful to those engaged in career guidance. It has extended its range of available resources to include many forms of self-directed career analysis and career planning materials.

ERIC: The ERIC Clearing-house on Adult, Career and Vocational Education provides assistance to inquirers from around the world by making referrals, providing data searches, answering subject-specific questions and issuing, usually at no cost, syntheses of information relating to career transitions. Over 70,000 practitioner-orientated materials were distributed in 1989. Based at the University of Ohio in the USA, ERIC provides a wealth of relevant information about many aspects of career development and associated support systems for all, including the disadvantaged.

Published textbooks: As experiments and experience grow with implementing career development support systems within organisations, useful data is appearing in print in articles and text book form. Within Australia Dr Pamela Weir and Alastair Rylatt, and Marlys Hanson in the USA have published articles. Book authors who relate their writings to applications within organisations include Manuel London, Edward M. Moore, C. Brooklyn Derr, E.H. Schein, Zandy B. Leibowitz, D. Hall, E.H. Burack, Beverly L. Kaye, D. Feldman, Fred L. Otte, Stephen Stumpf and Daniel Levinson. Bibliography searches will reveal the expanding range of this subject matter and the book titles produced by these writers.

Associations of career counsellors: In 1989 a national association, The Australian Association of Career Counsellors, was formed to promote career counselling as a professional discipline. It also serves the purpose of disseminating information, providing networking facilities for professionals engaged in the activity and consolidating data about this expanding field. Membership reflects the focus on both adult and teenage career transition issues and consists of counsellors who work in schools, government and commercial organisations as well as in private practice.

Established for a longer time is the National Association of Graduate Careers Advisers, whose members are engaged in career transition support within higher education institutions. For several years NAGCA has fostered the development of professional standards in student

counselling and through conferences, newsletters and publications disseminates information from both overseas and local sources.

Along with 50 others I was retrenched. I handled the experience badly as I was unemployed for several months and very insecure. I think my experience had a negative influence beyond what it should have. I felt "What is the use of making plans when we are 'pawns'?" I don't think that now.

People who have to go

Derecruitment, downsizing, 'middlectomy', employee divestment and redeployment, are new members of the managerial vocabulary as synonyms for redundancy or retrenchment. As market need grows so does the service industry sector respond with alacrity. In this context the service is termed outplacement. The tone of this term bothers me. I have chosen to call my services relating to the career transition of terminating employees Resettlement Services.

In a commentary about structural change within the N.S.W. Public Sector in 1989 the Editor of the magazine, *Directions In Government*, contributed the following succinct expression: "Management tools in this age of change have been joined by the guillotine of revolution." The writer's concern focused on the morale aspects of redundancy, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. "Such workers will be suffering a range of human reactions common to people who have gone through the traumatic shock of sudden loss, or who face a diagnosis of terminal illness. For people involved and identified with these organisations closure is similar to the experiences of living through the death of a close friend. At first people will deny what is happening. They will shut out the reality and isolate themselves. Then will come anger. Next, they will try to bargain, and then finally will come acceptance and hope for the changed future and choices that lie ahead. The costs to the individual are loss of identity, companionship of workmates, friendship patterns and familiar routines and comfort zones." For ten years I have assisted such people and can confirm that the Editor is not exaggerating or labouring the emotional message. In more recent years many organisations have been acknowledging this and engaging skilled help for the career transition.

There is criticism about some organisational approaches to redundancy and the associated terminations. Justice Bauer of the New South Wales Industrial Commission (July 1989) cautioned the N.S.W. State Government about their handling of terminations and concluded

his statement by stating,"where planned redundancies are to be put into effect planning should involve a concept of a social plan for displaced workers."

Career support funded by the employer for terminating staff protects the image of the organisation, both externally and internally. Policy and cost sometimes preclude providing an employee who has 'to go' with outplacement help through a third party consultancy. An alternative is to purchase and donate to affected individuals career transition resource material that will help them to review their next step, and prepare and implement alternative job search strategies. For many they are job seeking for only the second time in their lives.

The area of neglect by many organisations remains the implementation of concurrent career development support strategies for those employees who are not victims of downsizing but are expected and, in fact, the employer is dependent on, to keep the organisation functioning efficiently. The morale of those staying is as important as those terminating.

THE CENTRE FOR WORKLIFE COUNSELLING

RESETTLEMENT SERVICES

Our code of conduct for providing career transition counselling for terminating employees includes the following:

We:

- offer career transition counselling services as a serious professional specialty, emphasising quality;
- accept only those assignments which we have the proficiency to service;
- respect clients receiving the service;
- maintain broad experience and competence to advise with authority;
- commit to client's goals and develop discipline to stay with the client until the alternative job search campaign is concluded;
- treat confidential information as confidential information.

Resettlement (outplacement) services: The desirable contents of a resettlement service for terminating employees should be:

- Re-evaluation of career direction;
- Evaluation of employment options;
- Up-to-date realistic information on re-employment prospects, recruitment practices and procedures;
- Material and information resources available for the person who wants to become self-employed;
- Research assistance to identify organisations and people who the job seeker can approach, and guidance in how to carry this out;
- Design of a self-marketing strategy to alternative employers;
- Guidance in preparing interview-winning job application letters;
- Help in designing and writing effective résumés;
- Selection interview training (rehearsal and personal improvement guidance) including 'body language' tuition;
- Extended knowledge of job-seeking techniques other than just responding to recruitment advertisements;
- A counsellor, who can act as a catharsis for feelings of strong emotion, frustration, despair and low self-esteem and helps the individual return to being a self-confident person;
- Pragmatic review of personal financial assets, liabilities and cash flow, and the development of a workable budget for the likely career transition period;
- Provision of advice, either from the counsellor or a sub-contracted specialist, concerning allocation of termination pay to optimise personal funds; in particular, information about the choices, entry fees, administration charges, withdrawal penalties and commissions associated with 'roll-over' funds;
- Stress management training where appropriate;
- New learning which can be used again by the individual alone if employment loss recurs;
- Emotional support and companionship so that the individual is not job searching alone and unaided;
- Client confidentiality of personal data is vigorously maintained.

Morale retention: Terminations put some staff out of employment and leave the remaining employees defensive, wary and worried. Their career development aspirations are threatened. If you face this problem, the following may help you manage this difficult process:

1 Use thoroughly planned strategic objectives to develop criteria for deciding who stays and who is vulnerable. Make line managers responsible for the final decision on terminations. That builds accountability and acceptance for the need to implement changes.

2 Communicate the real facts. Rebut rumours by encouraging candid communication up and down the organisation structure. Manage the information flow by being honest, timely, thorough and accurate.

3 Justify the need for change. Help employees understand the organisation's situation. Keep employees informed of redeployment plans and the support services which will be provided. If you are to reorganise, let staff know as soon as possible how, when and to whom it will happen.

4 Respect employee dignity. Give adequate notice so that people can make plans and adjust to the idea of downsizing. Avoid firing on Fridays. Early retirement, voluntary separation schemes and other incentives may produce the necessary staff reductions.

5 Rehearse line managers and supervisors in how to answer questions, deal with employees in a fair and unbiased manner and how to conduct the termination interview.

6 Hire a professional outplacement firm to help displaced staff; 'survivors' find knowledge of this action comforting too. Outplacement helps to demonstrate the employer's concern and provides counselling for all terminated employees.

7 Encourage survivors to mark the leaving of co-workers with retirement dinners, farewell luncheons and so on. Attend, yourself, as many as possible. Don't hide!

8 Develop and emphasise new missions of the organisation. Increase the degree of employee participation (suggestions, project review teams, etc.) in the morale rebuilding process. Involve employees in identifying problems, developing goals and designing action plans. Seek to give everyone a sense of ownership in the new organisational situation.

9 Be sensitive to the needs of remaining employees. They are bound to mourn the loss of friends, colleagues and 'the way things were'.

Provide workshops led by a skilled trainer to help those who are staying deal with guilt, insecurity, stress and anger.

10 Provide workshops for those remaining in career planning and worklife decision making, or one-to-one counselling facilities, to reinforce the value of staying rather than resigning in haste.

11 Reduce the overall workload when the work-force is reduced. Have employees concentrate on business that must get done.

12 Communicate a clear description of criteria for performance measurement methods and reward positive contributions.

13 Re-define and communicate to staff the 'psychological contract' (what the employees need, what the organisation needs, what each will give to meet the other's needs).

14 Train your managers. They will need to know how to fulfil their responsibilities with fewer resources. Leadership and delegation skills become more important than ever.

15 Learn about the legal aspects of downsizing. Inappropriately handled terminations may result in lawsuits.

EVALUATING AN OUTPLACEMENT SERVICE

- How long has it been established?
- Does it put emphasis on the aspects of helping or on commercial image?
- What is the assessment of the integrity of the counselling (not marketing) staff?
- Are the services offered flexible, or a 'fixed package'?
- Does the service provide help towards self-employment?
- Does the service channel clients back into re-employment in the same career path, or consider what is the best direction for the individual?
- Does the service write résumés or train clients to prepare their own?
- What do past clients say about them?

Choosing skilled outplacement help: The task of a skilled helper is to help the individual come to terms with feelings, review the total situation of their living, recognition of personal strengths and the identifying of transferable skills. In addition, the skilled helper assists the person use these facts and reflections to decide future worklife direction. Concurrent with these is the need to maintain the motivation of the person. The selection criteria should be the nature and credentials of the skilled helper to be assigned to the process, not the selection of an organisation by its repute alone. The working environment of the skilled helper should be one which puts more emphasis on the professional aspects of helping rather than the commercial, provides flexible services, not fixed 'helping packages', and has a record of sensitivity and effectiveness in this nature of work.

Lack of understanding about career development

When the quest for reductions in expenditure is more intense than customary, cost cutting of career development support efforts is frequently based on a misunderstanding of its purpose. Many managers fail to perceive that career development support systems need to be developed as a response to particular problems in an organisation. Training function staff involved in career development tuition or counselling activities are often ill-prepared, even unskilled, in defending their programs from emasculation during these periods of organisational change.

When costs are an issue, career development is too often disregarded as a methodology to address such a specific problem. In fact, a major objective of career development is to help with the organisational need for a shared problem-solving process. Rising costs, high absenteeism or staff turnover, internal friction between people, groups or departments, breakdowns in communication, resistance to and inability to change are frequently at the root of an organisation's problems.

As with most attempts to find solutions to problems, one invariably has to analyse the causes first: not the 'apparent', not the 'imaginary', but the real problem(s). Herein lies one of the fundamental benefits of career development. That is, in its initial stage of implementation, the creating of a situation in which the real causes of problems can be uncovered. By 'unfettering' staff views much can be learned about organisational improvement needs.

Costs and time: Wherever behaviour modification, attitudinal change and cohesive group effort are required, the element of time, as well as the selection of the appropriate methodology, is paramount to ensuring success. Career development does not lend itself to 'quickie' solutions. It is concerned with solutions which are effective and lasting. Herein lies much of the reason for resistance to career development support systems as a means to helping solve problems regarded as urgent for resolution. Success will not come about by piecemeal interventions nor patchwork short-term corrections to human resource management procedures.

Realism about outcomes

In times of change managers need to act responsibly and promptly. One or two career development actions do not constitute effective career development support systems. In the haste to identify solutions, managers may adopt strategies which do not realise desired benefits. The time to study and evaluate career development does not lend itself to hasty review. Despite its potential, managers need to be realistic about the time-frames for positive outcomes. Career development support interventions implemented without realism about outcomes have the inherent danger of not assisting the organisation operating in a satisfactory environment and condition.

Our work places are more troubled than they have been for many years. Mergers, acquisitions, downsizing, reconstructions are more common. In turn, this has affected both employees' views on the duration of their career horizons with current employers and the aspect of trust between management and staff. Insecurity is the widespread characteristic among employees' attitudes. The 'culture' of most organisations has changed.

Career development has the potential to help employers cope with this change, in turn improve their relationships with customers and suppliers, and increase the effectiveness of the employees to the organisation and its structures, systems, goals, tasks and performance. Career development does link business issues with their human resources implications. It is, in essence, a modern technique for progressing towards success once the latter has been defined in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Career Development is a growth area for the organisational researcher, the academic and the executive manager concerned with the search for more effective means of using

human resources. This subject area is creating growing interest, concerning as it does the individual and his or her potential within the world of work.

Furthermore, career development has a close interdependence with a range of other disciplines such as organisational behaviour, psychology, human resource accounting, industrial sociology, industrial relations and economics. The boundaries are yet to be clearly defined. This can occur only when more take the courage to apply career development support systems to organisations and the record of experience and outcomes is accelerated.

Despite its relative infancy, there is now sufficient proof that career development is not 'another of those fuzzy Personnel schemes'. It is an important component of the total strategy of policies, procedures and programs essential to effecting improvement in human productivity and motivation in the work environment. There are now validated career development techniques and procedures available for use.

Parts One and Two of this book are published with minor amendment in a separate volume entitled *Enjoy Your Worklife!* (ISBN 1 875134 05 0) in order to:

- assist clients of Career Counsellors;
- be used by participants as a reference during trainer-led Career Development Workshops;
- be issued by employers to employees as stimuli to their personal career management effectiveness.

Bibliography

Curiosity about adult career transitions—how and why they are achieved, how organisations view career support activities and their experiences—is growing substantially within the country. Tertiary education students are electing to research and analyse this subject area. Human resource officers within the Private and Public Sector are seeking more information and resources to assist their design of in-company services. The general public, either through expected or unexpected events or non-events in their lives, are wanting to know more in order to help themselves. To assist this expanding range of information-seekers The Centre of Worklife Counselling has assembled a substantial bibliography of 175 texts and resource materials, together with annotations. The database for this bibliography is constantly being updated as new information is identified and evaluated as to its relevance and usefulness. A copy of this can be ordered by contacting The Centre in Sydney.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE OF QUESTIONS FROM XYZ Pty Ltd CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Circle the number you consider applies to you

Scale:
4 = strongly agree
3 = agree
2 = maybe, not certain
1 = disagree
0 = strongly disagree

A SKILLS ANALYSIS

A1	I know what skills I can offer (XYZ Pty Ltd)	0 1 2 3 4
A2	I know what skills (XYZ Pty Ltd) seeks in my current occupation	0 1 2 3 4
A3	I can list my major work task achievements in ways in which the results were clear and quantifiable	0 1 2 3 4
A4	I have sorted out my key strengths and accomplishments in terms of my career to date	0 1 2 3 4
A5	I have identified what additional knowledge, skills and experience is necessary for my next career goal position	0 1 2 3 4

B CAREER PLANNING

B1	I can list the most important personal factors that will affect my career over the next 3 years	0 1 2 3 4
B2	I can list at least two critical organisational factors that will influence my career progress with (XYZ Pty Ltd)	0 1 2 3 4
B3	I know at least two realistic potential career paths for me with (XYZ Pty Ltd)	0 1 2 3 4
B4	I know which responsibilities are mine and which are my employer's concerning the management of my career	0 1 2 3 4

B5	I have researched and committed to the necessary training courses/ development experiences to prepare for my next career move	0 1 2 3 4
B6	I know the right questions to ask when investigating possible new position opportunities	0 1 2 3 4
B7	I know accurately where I am in the four stages of career: • exploration and trial, • career advancement, • career maintenance, • career decline	0 1 2 3 4
B8	I have recorded a clear career goal and schedule for achieving each stage towards it	0 1 2 3 4
B9	I am clear on the essential requirements and the important factors to me in my next career move	0 1 2 3 4
B10	I know how to measure the value of an (XYZ Pty Ltd) job to my long-term career before applying for it	0 1 2 3 4
B11	Each month I work out and schedule at least one career development action to be taken while at work	0 1 2 3 4
B12	I am satisfied that my manager knows my goals and next desired action relevant to my career development	0 1 2 3 4
B13	My personal records about my career are up-to-date, e.g. résumé, copies of performance review, etc.	0 1 2 3 4
B14	My career development objectives have target dates and criteria by which success and progress can be measured	0 1 2 3 4
B15	Career goals have to be consistent with all of the following: my interests, values, skills and preferences	0 1 2 3 4
B16	There is adequate opportunity for me to learn about available job openings	0 1 2 3 4
B17	There is not enough opportunity to transfer between Departments	0 1 2 3 4
B18	Planning my career at (XYZ Pty Ltd) is my responsibility	0 1 2 3 4
B19	I feel totally responsible for the way my career is developing	0 1 2 3 4
B20	I have identified a job at (XYZ Pty Ltd) I might like to change to if my skills become redundant	0 1 2 3 4

B21 I know the next logical step beyond my current job which would clearly provide potential for increased satisfaction and acquiring new skills 0 1 2 3 4

B22 I have identified my short-term promotion goal—the job which I hope to be doing in, say, 18 months' time or less 0 1 2 3 4

B23 I have identified what additional knowledge, skill and experience I will need in order to be a candidate for this goal 0 1 2 3 4

B24 I have drawn up a realistic action plan for achieving my goal 0 1 2 3 4

B25 I have established some review dates at which I will check my progress towards achieving my goal 0 1 2 3 4

B26 I see value in researching the career paths of other people who have held the job in which I am interested, including the current occupant 0 1 2 3 4

B27 I have time for part-time course attendance given the current demands of my job, family, commuting, and development of non-work interests 0 1 2 3 4

C CAREER MANAGEMENT

C1 I have listed the apparent current constraints to achieving satisfaction in my career 0 1 2 3 4

C2 I regularly maintain a written record of my achievements at work in readiness for performance review discussions with my boss 0 1 2 3 4

C3 I know the reasons for my past career move choices 0 1 2 3 4

C4 The relationship with my boss is the most critical determinant of my employment success 0 1 2 3 4

C5 At work I generally display a positive self-image and a strong sense of purpose 0 1 2 3 4

C6 I have a clear idea of how my job fits into the overall operation of (XYZ Pty Ltd) 0 1 2 3 4

C7 I believe I am receiving the training and other preparation necessary for my future development 0 1 2 3 4

C8	The way my remuneration (pay) is determined is clear to me	0 1 2 3 4
C9	I am doing something I consider really worthwhile in my job	0 1 2 3 4
C10	Morale where I work is generally high	0 1 2 3 4
C11	I think it's fun working at (XYZ Pty Ltd)	0 1 2 3 4
C12	Managers encourage me to feel secure in my job	0 1 2 3 4
C13	I have assessed the most practical way to influence my boss to assist my career progress	0 1 2 3 4
C14	I have discussed my aspirations with my boss and sought his/her advice on what action to take	0 1 2 3 4
C15	I have encouraged my boss to give me projects which will help to fill the gaps in my experience	0 1 2 3 4

D CAREER REALITY

D1	I think that most career setbacks are caused by lack of ability rather than personality factors	0 1 2 3 4
D2	I believe there is only one occupation for which each individual is best suited	0 1 2 3 4
D3	If I am seeking a promotion or transfer it is important to learn why the predecessor left	0 1 2 3 4
D4	I believe that my boss wants me to propose a career goal during my next performance review discussion	0 1 2 3 4
D5	At work nearly every person plays a role and acts unlike their real self	0 1 2 3 4
D6	Office politics do not exist in a well-run employment environment	0 1 2 3 4
D7	Willingness to experience more risk-taking is essential for achieving career moves	0 1 2 3 4
D8	Change is so rapid that skills learned today are likely to become obsolete in less than five years' time	0 1 2 3 4
D9	On balance, hard work is less important to success than are power and 'office politics'	0 1 2 3 4

D10 On balance, hard work is equally important to success as are power and 'office politics' 0 1 2 3 4

D11 On balance, hard work is more important to success than are power and 'office politics' 0 1 2 3 4

D12 The more involved you become in your colleagues' goals and needs, the more likely you are to get cooperation from them when you need it 0 1 2 3 4

D13 Your relations with work mates are at risk when you show you are ambitious 0 1 2 3 4

D14 Proposing the benefits to your listener and the organisation is the best way to secure a career advancement 0 1 2 3 4

D15 One should go after job tasks that provide an opportunity to make you more positively visible within the organisation 0 1 2 3 4

D16 I have applied to attend training courses in subjects which are relevant to my career plan 0 1 2 3 4

D17 I feel that if I were not at work next week my personal contribution would be missed 0 1 2 3 4

D18 The most important thing about the work I do is the pay I receive 0 1 2 3 4

D19 My career progress seems frustrated for reasons that I cannot identify 0 1 2 3 4

D20 Further advancement appears beyond my reach for reasons that I cannot control 0 1 2 3 4

E CAREER HELP RESOURCES

E1 I know where to obtain an unbiased review of my personal development needs, career plans, and proposed actions 0 1 2 3 4

E2 I know how to identify an appropriate mentor and secure his/her assistance 0 1 2 3 4

E3 People are increasingly finding it helpful to use mentors in their careers 0 1 2 3 4

E4	When you have a tough problem to resolve you should involve your mentor	0 1 2 3 4
E5	Your mentor does not have to have the same personality traits as yourself	0 1 2 3 4
E6	The best mentor has a wide range of current skills to pass on	0 1 2 3 4
E7	Networking means talking only to people who have senior positions	0 1 2 3 4
E8	I maintain a list of useful contacts and acquaintances to help me in readiness for when I need to network for information	0 1 2 3 4
E9	Career path finding is different to networking	0 1 2 3 4

F PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

F1	I ensure that I have a clear, unambiguous, up-to-date job description	0 1 2 3 4
F2	Each day I revise my to do list and re-set priorities for my job tasks	0 1 2 3 4
F3	I have a very clear idea of what is expected of me in my job	0 1 2 3 4
F4	I am often bothered by excessive pressure in my job	0 1 2 3 4
F5	I have too many conflicting objectives in my job	0 1 2 3 4
F6	There is scope in my work to develop improved ways of doing things and/or contribute new ideas when appropriate	0 1 2 3 4
F7	I think my performance on the job is judged fairly	0 1 2 3 4
F8	I do not understand how my performance on the job is judged	0 1 2 3 4
F9	I'm required to undertake too many tasks **not** written in my job description	0 1 2 3 4

G EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT

G1	I can be sure of my job with (XYZ Pty Ltd) as long as I perform well	0 1 2 3 4

G2 I think management will communicate decisions on this questionnaire to employees 0 1 2 3 4

G3 Filling in this survey is a good way to let management know what I think 0 1 2 3 4

G4 I think that management will ignore problems brought to its attention in this survey 0 1 2 3 4

I am concerned that my job security is threatened by:

G5 Being made redundant 0 1 2 3 4
G6 Being moved to another job 0 1 2 3 4
G7 Being unable to progress beyond my present job 0 1 2 3 4
G8 Changes in management 0 1 2 3 4
G9 Changes in organisation 0 1 2 3 4
G10 Decentralisation 0 1 2 3 4
G11 The future of (XYZ Pty Ltd) 0 1 2 3 4
G12 Technological change 0 1 2 3 4

The following factors are important in getting a promotion at (XYZ Pty Ltd)

G13 Doing a good job 0 1 2 3 4
G14 Knowing the right people 0 1 2 3 4
G15 Length of service 0 1 2 3 4
G16 Level of education 0 1 2 3 4
G17 Being in the right place at the right time 0 1 2 3 4
G18 Being dispensable in your current job 0 1 2 3 4
G19 Willingness to work long hours 0 1 2 3 4
G20 Willingness to relocate 0 1 2 3 4
G21 I think that (XYZ Pty Ltd) promotes the right people 0 1 2 3 4
G22 I am usually informed in good time about changes which affect me 0 1 2 3 4
G23 (XYZ Pty Ltd) usually promotes qualified employees before hiring outsiders 0 1 2 3 4
G24 Greater emphasis is needed in (XYZ Pty Ltd) to hire and promote employees regardless of discriminating factors, e.g., age, ethnic origin, sex or handicap 0 1 2 3 4
G25 It is difficult for employees of (XYZ Pty Ltd) to advance if they choose not to seek managerial responsibilities 0 1 2 3 4
G26 (XYZ Pty Ltd) does an effective job of keeping me informed about overall company policy 0 1 2 3 4

G27 I am satisfied with the procedures available for resolving employee grievances 0 1 2 3 4

G28 From what I hear, my pay is better here than I could earn in a similar position in another organisation 0 1 2 3 4

Acknowledgements

Writers who claim that their books are an individual effort are fooling themselves. This publication has had a backstage crew of hundreds, though most of them would be surprised to be made aware of this fact. The host of people who have been clients of my worklife counselling service are very special to me. They have provided a most fulfilling way of earning a living, and also shared their diverse personal circumstances, not always confined to their occupational activities. They have given me so much additional information about the dilemmas people face and wrestle with each day in pursuing their careers. I am grateful for their trust and courage in sharing their problems with me. The issues they have raised have contributed significantly to the contents of this book.

Many people engaged in human resource work within organisations have also contributed both by their intellect, constructive criticism, companionship and shared personal values! In particular I refer to John Buss, Rodney Gray, Judith Hamilton, Marlys Hanson, Arnold Hendry, Bob Kane, Peter Philipson, Louise Riddell, Alastair Rylatt, Julie Taylor, Wendy Taylor, Imogen Wareing, and Ken Williams.

In addition, I am well aware that it takes a team of people to take words created by me through the exhausting processes to the appearance of a book in print. I am surrounded by a team of wonderful people: My publicist, Faye Cameron, who helps the community become aware that the book actually exists and is available. My 'ideas person', Ann Reynolds, designer of this book, who wields the software which shapes and checks the manuscript and applies her zeal and expertise as proficiently as a conductor of a symphony orchestra. My editors, Jo Rudd and Jim Stephenson, who are not afraid to rebuke me for poor style, syntax or grammar. My wife, Peggy, who puts up with the stress outcries when a work of this nature is undertaken over an extended period. And, of course, my teenage daughter, Natalie, who has already made her first career direction decision . . . unaided! All are precious people to me. It is they who keep me going. I am privileged to have such a dedicated team supporting my efforts.

Index

Australian Institute of Training and Development, 155
ACER, 160-162
Affirmative Action, 34, 129-131
Age: age consciousness, 11-12; aging and change, 11-12; career life cycle, 24-25; constraints, 32, 45; Erikson, Erik, 10; expected events, 4-5; Job, Eena, 23; Krumboltz, Joseph, 29; Levinson, Daniel, 10, 29, 162; life stages, 9-10, 30; non-events, 8-9; McFarlane, Jillian, 8; Super, Donald, 29, 34; unexpected events, 5-8; Valiant, George 10
Assessment of Career Decision Making (ACDM), 91-92
Associations of career counsellors, 162-163
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 4, 7
Award restructuring, 128, 148

B

Biographical review, 48-53
Bolles, Richard N., 29, 34, 51
Burack, E. H., 162

C

Career burnout, 17-18
Career change, 12
Career development consultants, 155-158
Career Development Interest Group, 155
Career development support systems, 131-132, 137: career development consultants, 155-158; career information centres, 146-147; computer-aided career development, 134, 147; Employee Assistance Programs, 131; employee inventory systems, 131, 147-148; employer's role, 77-82, 123-131; Hall, David, 29, 162; Hanson, Marlys, 34, 162; job posting bulletins, 134; job rotation, 137; Kaye Beverly, 34, 162; productivity benefits 135-136; religious orders, 115-121; targeting efforts 133; Walker, Alan, 29; workbooks, 144-146; 149-151; worklife counselling, 24, 76, 152, 154-155; workshops, 138-144, 148-149
Career development theory, 27-30
Career dilemmas, 18, 31
Career guidance, 24
Career hazards, 19-20
Career information: community resources, 33-34: ASCO, 111-112; career information centres, 146-147; careers reference centres, 109; Careerskills Centre, Perth, 112-113; networks, 110-111; publications, 78-79, 112, 162; self-help support clubs, 113-115; worklife counselling, 24, 76, 152, 154-155
Career information centres, 146-147
Career journeys, 3-4, 70: career change, 12; career dilemmas, 18, 31; career life cycle, 24-25; career re-alignment, 11-12; career renewal, 11-12; career setbacks 6, 32; constraints, 32, 45; decision making, 29, 33, 56-59, 91-93; expectations of others, 14-15; goals, 16, 35, 42-44, 54; life plan, 32; mood control, 60; motivation, 91; multiple concerns, 83-84; psychological success, 31; self-analysis, 22, 36; self-confidence, 11; self-directed exploration, 126; Sheehy, Gail, 10, 34; three-dimensional approach, 40-42

Career life cycle, 24–25
Career plateau, 68–69
Career re-alignment, 11–12
Career renewal, 11–12
Career setbacks, 6, 32
Careers reference centres, 109
Careerskills Centre, Perth, 112–113
Computer-aided career development, 134, 147
Constraints: age consciousness, 11–12; aging and change, 11–12; constraints, 32, 45; expectations of others, 14–15; influences of other people, 12–14; mood control, 60; multiple concerns, 82–84; psychosomatic illnesses, 69; resistance to help, 83; significant other, 14–15, 63, 102–103
Counselling: 'homework' approach, 94–101; career guidance, 24; coach, 54, 63; counselling beliefs, 82; counsellor's obligations, 87–89; counselling process, 90; decision making, 29, 33, 56–59, 91–93; life-planning training, 131; Morton, Garry W., 80; multiple concerns, 83–84; resistance to help, 83; self-directed exploration, 126; structured career analysis, 46–59, 90–91; supporting the client, 102–103; three-dimensional approach, 40–42; worklife counselling, 24, 76, 152, 154–155
Counselling beliefs, 82
Counsellor's obligations, 87–89
Counsellor's resources: ACER, 160–162; ASCO, 111–112; associations of career counsellors, 162–163; Career Development Interest Group, 155; computer-aided career development, 134, 147; Decision Preference Analysis (DPA), 158–160; Employee Assistance Programs, 131; ERIC, 162; International Journal of Career Management 160–161; preference and interests measurement, 158–160; psychometric testing, 28; publications, 78–79, 112, 162; Schlossberg, Dr. Nancy K., 80; Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII), 159–160; Work Aspect Preference Scale (WAPS), 159–160; workbooks, 144–146; 149–151
Crystal, John, 29, 34, 51

D

Decision learning, 54, 56–59
Decision making, 29, 33, 56–59, 91–93
Decision Preference Analysis (DPA), 158–160
Derr, C. Broklyn, 45–46, 162
Dual career couples, 15–17, 129: lifestyle management, 21–23; partnerships, 13; Rapoport, Robert, 34; relationships, 13–14; significant other, 14–15, 63, 102–103
Dupe, 29

E

Emotional stability, 11
Employee Assistance Programs, 131
Employee inventory systems, 131, 147–148
Employer's role, 77–82, 123–131
Employment cultures, 18
Employment environment, 18
Equal Employment Opportunity, 12, 34, 129–131: discrimination, 12, 107–108
ERIC, 162
Erikson, Erik, 10
Excel Human Resource Development, 157
Expectations of others, 14–15
Expected events, 4–5

F

Farrell, Michael, 10
Feingold, S. Norman, 34
Feldman, D., 162
Figler, Howard, 29, 34, 65
Fine, Sydney, 34

G

Ginzberg, Eli, 29, 34
Goals, 16, 35, 42–44, 54

H

Haldane, Bernard, 30
Hall, David, 29, 162
Hanson, Marlys, 34, 162
Harren, V.A., 91-92
Hicks, R., 158
Hidden job market, 62
Holland, John, 29, 34

I

IBM Australia Limited, 150-151
Influences of other people, 12-14
International Journal of Career Management, 160-161
Interviews, 104-108: interview skills, 55; mentor, 54, 63, 104; reality testing, 53, 62; recruitment agencies, 102; research interviews, 53, 61

J

Job content, 18
Job descriptions, 105
Job, Eena, 23
Job rotation, 137
Job posting bulletins, 134
Job seeking, 54-56, 64: careers reference centres, 109; community resources, 33-34; Figler, Howard, 29, 34, 65; hidden job market, 62; interview skills, 55; interviews, 104-108; Medley, H. Anthony, 65; networking, 53, 111; networks, 110-111; outplacement, 164-165; recruitment agencies, 102; résumé, 55, 108-109; self-help support clubs, 113-115

K

Kable, J, 158
Kaye, Beverly, 34, 162
Krumboltz, Joseph, 29

L

Leibowitz, Zandy B., 162
Legal & General, 138
Levinson, Daniel, 10, 29, 162
Life plan, 32
Life-planning training, 131
Life stages, 9-10, 30
Lifestyle management, 21-23
London, Manuel, 162

M

Manager: boss as coach, 80-83, 152; employer's role, 77-82, 123-131; outplacement, 164-165: downsizing, 128, 163; performance reviews, 134; promotion, 65-66, 124-125; transfer and promotion actions, 124-125; worklife politics, 66-68
McFarlane, Jillian, 8
Medley, H. Anthony, 65
Mentor, 54, 63, 104
Mentoring, 54
Merck Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Limited, 139
Miller, Arthur, 30
Moore, Edward C., 162
Moses, Dr Barbara, 146
Motivated abilities, 30: preference and interests measurement, 158-160; Decision Preference Analysis (DPA), 158-160; Haldane, Bernard, 30; Hicks, R, 158; Kable, J, 158; Miller, Arthur, 30; Pryor, Robert, 159; Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII), 159-160; Work Aspect Preference Scale (WAPS), 159-160
Multiple concerns, 83-84

N

Negative job elements, 31, 33
Networking, 53, 111
Networks, 110-111
Neugarten, Bernice, 10
NIS Associates, 158
Non-events, 8-9

O

Opportunity awareness, 52-53

Organisational change, 126-128: downsizing, 128, 163; redeployment, 34; redundancy, 34; outplacement, 164-165; award restructuring, 128, 148; job rotation, 137; transfer and promotion actions, 124-125; worklife politics, 66-68
Otte, Fred L., 162
Outplacement, 164-165: downsizing, 128, 163; morale retention, 166-167; skilled helpers, 167-168

P

Parker, Yana, 108-109
Performance reviews, 134
Preference and interests measurement, 158-160
Promotion, 65-66, 124-125
Pryor, Robert, 159
Psychological success, 31
Psychometric testing, 28
Psychosomatic illnesses, 69
Public Sector, 33, 112-113
Publications, 78-79, 112, 162

Q

Questionnaires: Career Setbacks, 6; Analyse Your Current Job, 19; Diagnosing Career Review Need, 37; Auditing Your Career Management Skills, 71; Testing Your Career Transition Skills, 72; Checklist at Point of Commitment to Career Transition, 74; Aid to Identifying Client's Concerns and the Counselling Objectives, 84; Workshop Evaluation, 143; Carer Development Program Questionnaire, 172-179

R

Rapoport, Robert, 34
Reality testing, 53, 62
Recruitment agencies, 102
Redeployment, 34
Redundancy, 34
Research interviews, 53, 61
Resistance to help, 83
Résumé, 55, 108-109: Parker, Yana, 108-109
Robinson, Paula, 34
Roe, Anne, 29, 34
Rosenberg, Stanley, 10
Rylatt, Alastair, 162

S

Schein, Ed, 29, 34, 162
Schlossberg, Dr Nancy K., 10, 80
Self-analysis, 22, 36
Self-assessment, 39, 51-52
Self-concept, 36, 41
Self-confidence, 11
Self-directed exploration, 126
Selp-help support clubs, 113-115
Self-initiated career planning, 126
Sheehy, Gail, 10, 34
Significant other, 14-15, 63, 102-103
Sinetar, Marsha, 27, 36-37
Skills: Bolles, Richard N., 29, 34, 51; Crystal, John, 29, 34, 51; employee inventory systems, 131, 147-148; Feingold, S. Norman, 34; Fine, Sidney, 34; transferable skills, 29, 52
State Bank of NSW, 140
Statistics, 4, 7
Stevens, Paul: Stevens' career development theory, 46-47, 88, 90-91: decision learning, 54, 56-59; 'homework' approach, 94-101; interpreting data, 97-101; opportunity awareness, 52-53; self-assessment, 39, 51-52; structured career analysis, 46-59, 90-91; three-dimensional analysis, 40-42; transition training, 54-56; 101-102
Stress, 17, 165: emotional stability, 11; career burnout, 17-18; career plateau, 68-69; crises, 8; lifestyle management, 21-23; mood control, 16, 35, 42-44, 54; negative job elements, 31, 33; non-events, 8-9, psychosomatic illnesses, 69; significant other, 14-15, 63, 102-

103; support relationships, 11, 113-115; unexpected events, 5-8
Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII), 159-160
Structure career analysis, 46-59, 90-91
Stumpf, Stephen, 162
Super, Donald, 29, 34
Support relationships, 20, 136
Surveys, 136-138

T

Three-dimensional analysis, 39-40
Three-dimensional approach, 40-42
Transfer and promotion actions, 124-125
Transferable skills, 29, 52
Transition training, 54-56, 101-102
Tredeman, Alan, 30

U

Unexpected events, 5-8

V

Valiant, George, 10
Values, 11, 52; Derr, C. Brooklyn, 45-46; self-analysis, 22, 36 (see also Constraints)

W

Walker, Alan, 29
Weir, Dr. Pamela, 162
Work Aspect Preference Scale (WAPS), 159-160
Workbooks, 144-146, 149-151
Worklife counselling, 24, 76, 152, 154-155
Worklife politics, 66-68
Workshop evaluation, 141-142
Workshops, 138-144, 148-149

ALSO BY PAUL STEVENS

STOP POSTPONING THE REST OF YOUR LIFE: Achieving Career Satisfaction

This is about you, your career and its effects on your life. The contents provide many ways to carry out that essential self-exploration and analysis in order to know where your career should be going. It is designed to help you identify ALL your work-related skills and capabilities; remove personal doubts and hesitancy about what you should be doing; increase your belief in yourself in an honest and practical way. The self-learning exercises include diagnosing what is wrong about your worklife and how to choose your alternative career direction. This thoroughly revised and extended new edition shows you how to find improved inner well-being from your employment activities. (ISBN 0 9587800 1 3)

PLANNING FOR ME! Setting Personal Goals

Planning For Me! is a workbook which incorporates self-directed learning and questionnaires. It can form the basis of a training module within a Career Development or Life Planning course or can be used by individuals working alone. It is is designed for those who have a desire for quality, not just quantity, as a goal in life. It helps combat the feeling of powerlessness that one can easily feel over the direction of life's journey. The contents help develop skills in life planning. In the process the reader will grow in self-confidence and learn to appreciate the pleasure of using personal power in constructive ways. The work you are asked to do is exacting. At the same time, you will find it challenging, fun, helpful and revealing.
(ISBN 1 875134 00 X)

WINNING AT WORK

A handbook of practical solutions to progress your career more effectively, presented in ready reference question/answer format. Exploding many career advancement myths, innovative solutions are provided dealing with success strategies, surviving the office environment, when the worst happens, evaluating your current situation, developing personal career management skills. Today's career survivor requires new ways to look after one's own interests at work. *Winning At Work* covers these critical elements and helps you be more in control of your career destiny. (ISBN 0 7131 8299 7)

CAREER TRANSITIONS

A Guide for Counsellors, Trainers and Employers

For human resource professionals, career counsellors, trainers and managers who develop programs and policies affecting people's careers. Incorporating the latest research findings in adult career development and the personal experiences of the author while engaged in counselling people and advising organisations.

Part 1 describes the career transition journey—its complexities, its hazards, its misconceptions—as people search for a sense of self-worth in their occupational activities and life management.

Part 2 shows how people can analyse their worklife assets and limitations, and establish and implement career development actions which are meaningful to them and those for whom they care.

Part 3 is a guide for all involved in counselling others as they prepare for and make career decisions. Part 4 illustrates the value to an employer in helping employees manage their careers and assist them explore their work environment for opportunities which fit what they discover they want and, in turn, benefit those who pay them.

The WORKLIFE Series

ISBN 1 875134 04 2